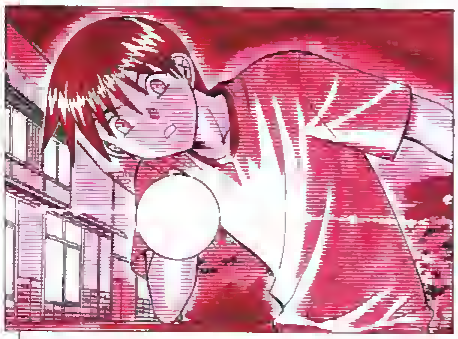


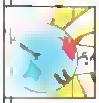
MONTHLY SHONEN MAGAZINE COMICS

Q.E.D.

……証明終了……

Quod Erat Demonstrandum

加藤元浩



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KCGM843

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Q.E.D.

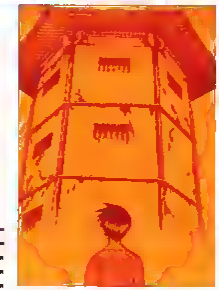
……証明終了……

I3

災厄の男

クラインの塔

Quod



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MONTHLY SHONEN MAGAZINE COMICS

Demonstrandum

加藤元浩

MOTOHIRO KATOU

講談社

ミネルヴァの鳥／銀の鍵
六郎の宝／ロスト・ロワイヤル
ブレイク・スルー／揺せた星図
1st.April.1999／ヤコブの階段
正んだ旋律／光の残像
ワタシノキオク…／青の密室
Serial John Doe／憂鬱な午後
フォーリング・ダウン／学園祭狂騒曲
ゲームの規則／凍てつく鉄槌
魔女の手の中に
守る辺の道／冬の動物園
銀河の片隅にて／虹の橋
光臣の男／クラインの壺

MOTOHIRO KATOU PRESENTS

ロケットマン1～3

a wom[illegible]
will use this spot to answer it.

uestion
hat do you think the face of a
an who is waiting for the miracle of
in in the desert looks like?

nswer
hat kind of face would be staring
a blank paper

otohiro to

カバーデザイン　朝倉健司

Q.E.D.13

証明終了

KCGM843

Q.E.D.

証明終了

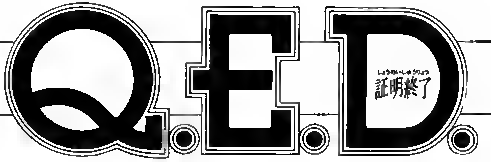
13

加藤元浩

加藤元浩 講談社

MONTHLY SHONEN MAGAZINE COMICS

We have supplied proof
for the following case in the
manner which you asked us to.



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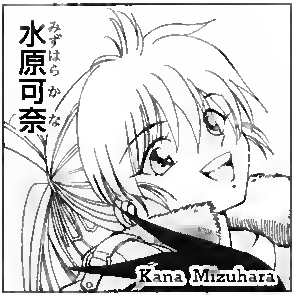
加藤元浩
MOTOHIRO KATOU

contents

Calamity Man ···5

Klein Tower ···99

CHARACTERS



水原可奈

燈馬のクラスメイト。刑事を父に持つ。男勝りの行動力と、脳天気なまでの明るさがウリの、健康優良女子高生。

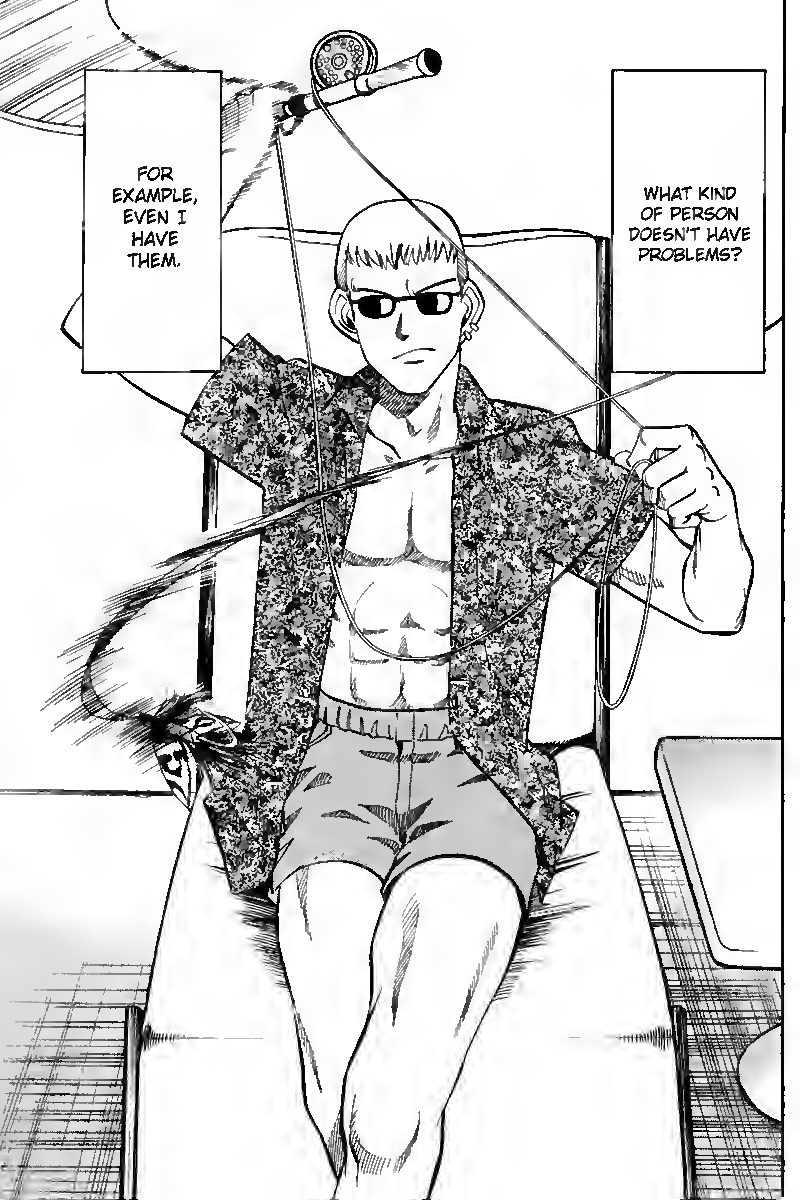
燈馬 想

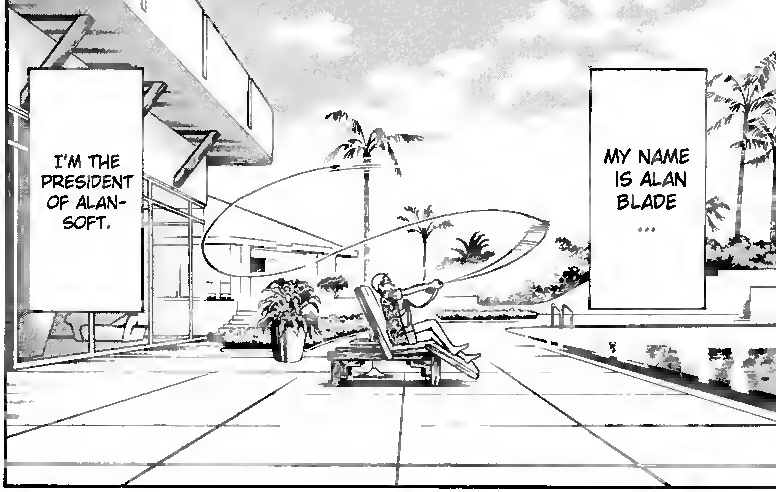
マサチューセッツ工科大学を15歳にして卒業、日本の高校に再入学した超天才児。多方面に豊富な知識を有する反面、人間の感情には疎い。

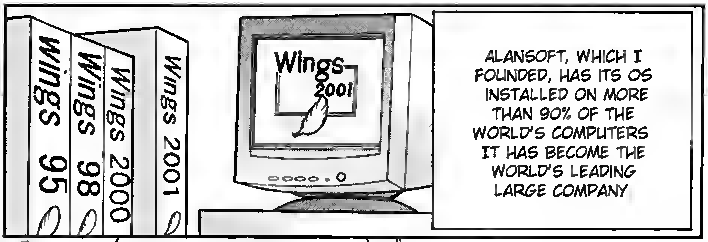
証明終了

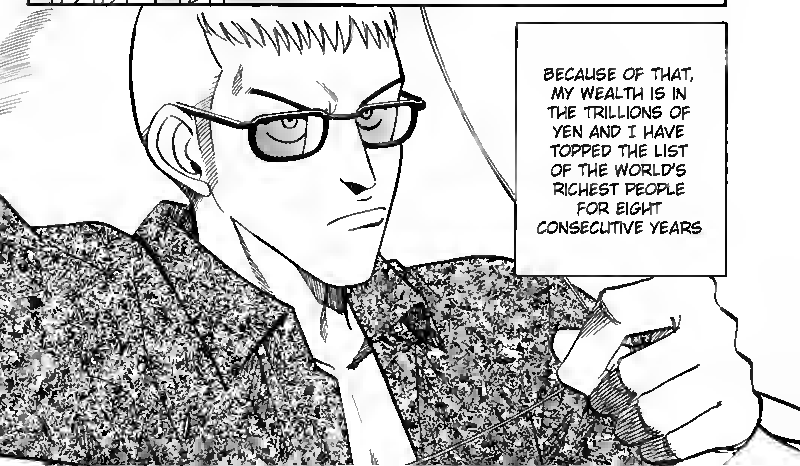
CALAMITY MAN

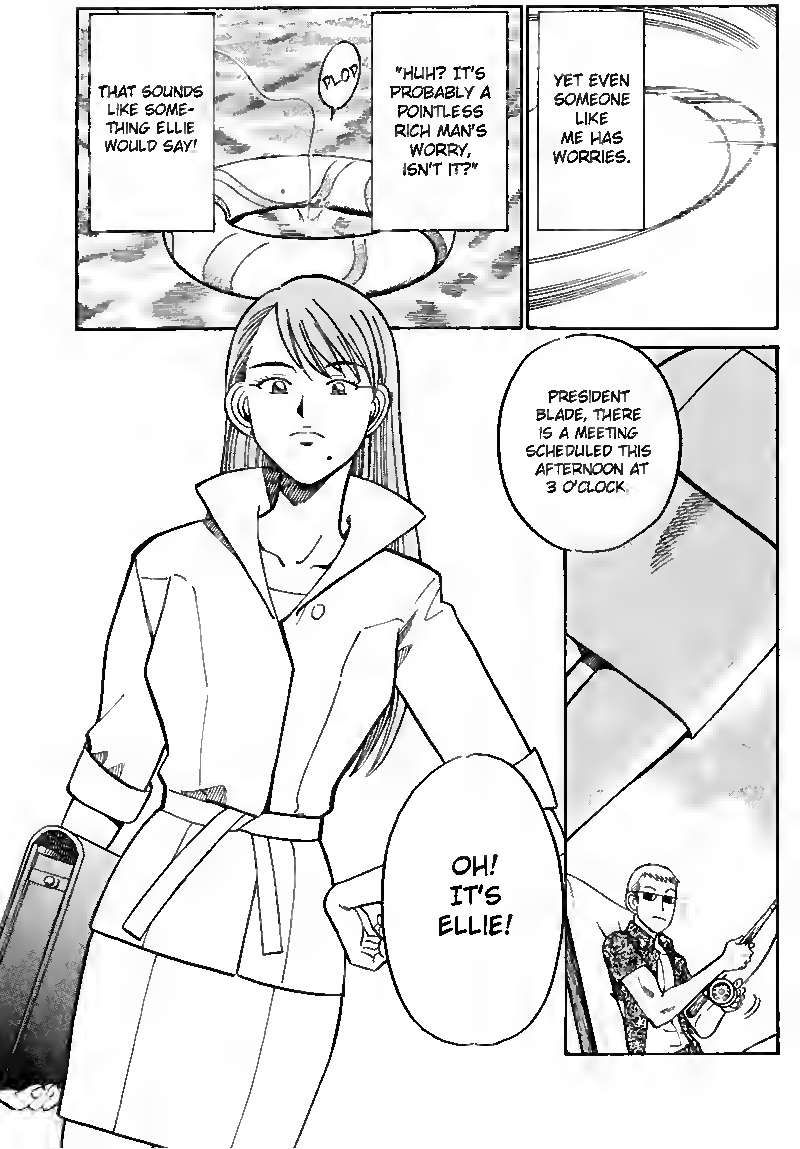
quod erat demonstrandum


FOR EXAMPLE, EVEN I HAVE THEM.
WHAT KIND OF PERSON DOESN'T HAVE PROBLEMS?

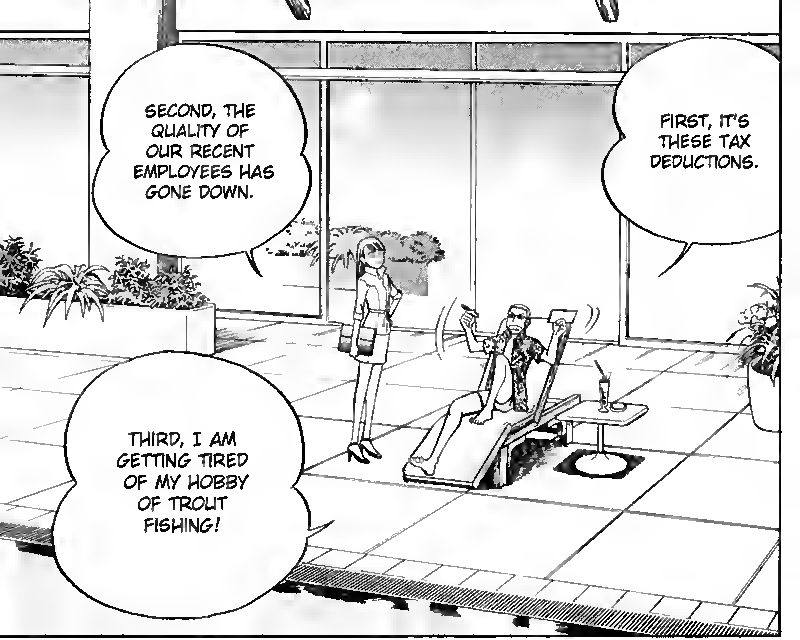

I'M THE PRESIDENT OF ALAN-SOFT.
MY NAME IS ALAN BLADE ...

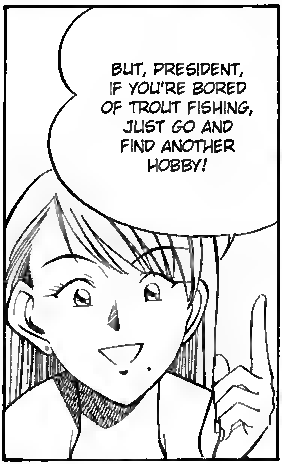

Wings 95
Wings 98
Wings 2000
Wings 2001
Wings 2001
ALANSOFT, WHICH I FOUNDED, HAS ITS OS INSTALLED ON MORE THAN 90% OF THE WORLD'S COMPUTERS IT HAS BECOME THE WORLD'S LEADING LARGE COMPANY


BECAUSE OF THAT, MY WEALTH IS IN THE TRILLIONS OF YEN AND I HAVE TOPPED THE LIST OF THE WORLD'S RICHEST PEOPLE FOR EIGHT CONSECUTIVE YEARS

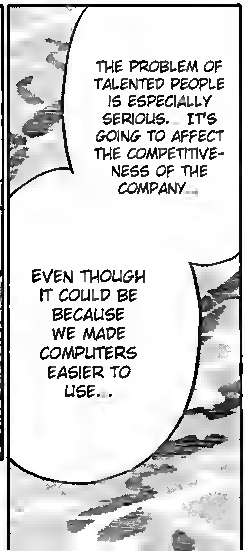

THAT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING ELLIE WOULD SAY!
PLOP
"HUH? IT'S PROBABLY A POINTLESS RICH MAN'S WORRY, ISN'T IT?"
YET EVEN SOMEONE LIKE ME HAS WORRIES.
PRESIDENT BLADE, THERE IS A MEETING SCHEDULED THIS AFTERNOON AT 3 O'CLOCK.
OH! IT'S ELLIE!

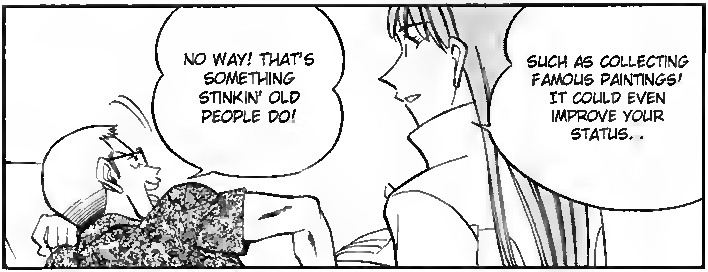
THOSE WHITE CLOUDS UP IN THE SKY!
SPEAK OF THE DEVIL!
SEE? SHE SAID IT.
THAT'S POINT-LESS.
WHO ARE YOU TALK-ING TO?
AH YES, THE TAX DEDUCTION!
IT'S THE DONATION TO THE VOLUNTEER ORGANISATION. WE TALKED ABOUT IT LAST TIME
YOU SHOULD SIGN THIS CHEQUE FIRST.
ELLIE, DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MY WORRIES?
He's so blunt...
IN THIS COUNTRY, YOU CAN REDUCE YOUR TAXES BY DONATING TO A CHARITY!


SECOND, THE QUALITY OF OUR RECENT EMPLOYEES HAS GONE DOWN.
FIRST, IT'S THESE TAX DEDUCTIONS.
THIRD, I AM GETTING TIRED OF MY HOBBY OF TROUT FISHING!

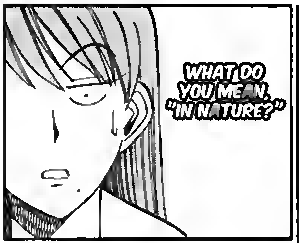

BUT, PRESIDENT, IF YOU'RE BORED OF TROUT FISHING, JUST GO AND FIND ANOTHER HOBBY!

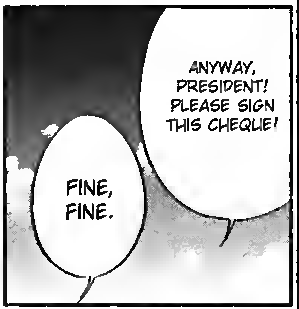
IF THAT GUY WAS HERE NOW ...


THE PROBLEM OF TALENTED PEOPLE IS ESPECIALLY SERIOUS. IT'S GOING TO AFFECT THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE COMPANY...
EVEN THOUGH IT COULD BE BECAUSE WE MADE COMPUTERS EASIER TO USE...

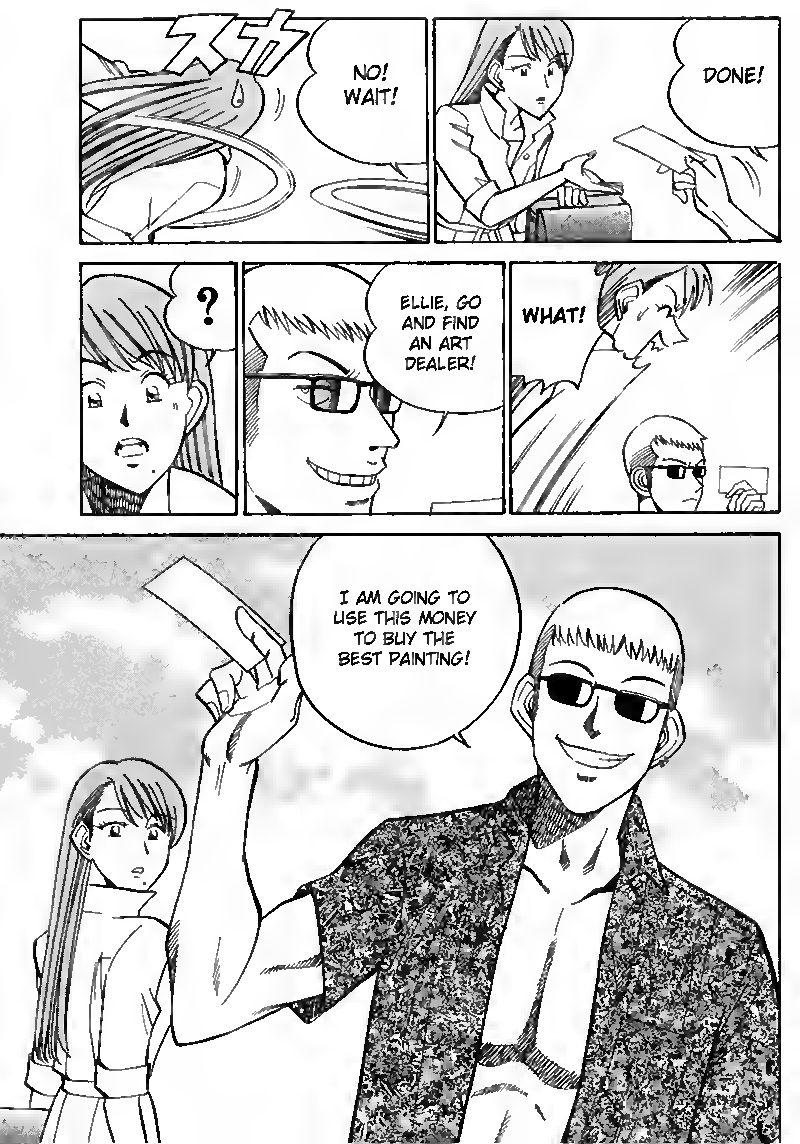

NO WAY! THAT'S SOMETHING STINKIN' OLD PEOPLE DO!
SUCH AS COLLECTING FAMOUS PAINTINGS! IT COULD EVEN IMPROVE YOUR STATUS. .

DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN USE THESE FLY LURES INSTEAD OF BAIT FOR TROUT FISHING?


WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "IN NATURE?"


ANYWAY, PRESIDENT! PLEASE SIGN THIS CHEQUE!
FINE, FINE.

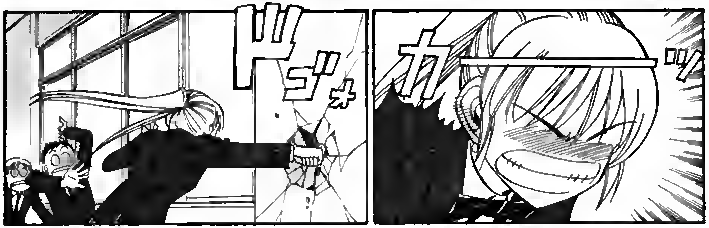
EVERY TIME I GO FISHING IN NATURE AND I SEE THESE STUPID FISH BEING FOOLED BY THIS FAKE BAIT, IT MAKES ME SO UNBELIEVABLY HAPPY!


NO! WAIT!
DONE!
?
ELLIE, GO AND FIND AN ART DEALER!
WHAT!
I AM GOING TO USE THIS MONEY TO BUY THE BEST PAINTING!

キーン
YOU DON'T SEEM YOURSELF, KANA RECENTLY YOU HAVEN'T HAD ANY ENERGY.
DID YOU EAT SOME ROTTEN FISH?
HAH
I'M NOT A FLY!

YOU REALLY DO SEEM TIRED...
WHAT'S WRONG?
AH... KANA!
PLEASE DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, I'M FINE! REALLY!
?
THIS GUY IS...

IT'S SO ANNOYING, DAMN IT!
DURING THAT CASE IN AMERICA, I...

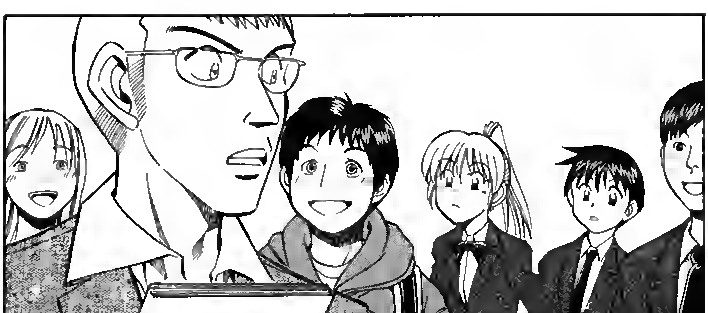

ドジッ
カ

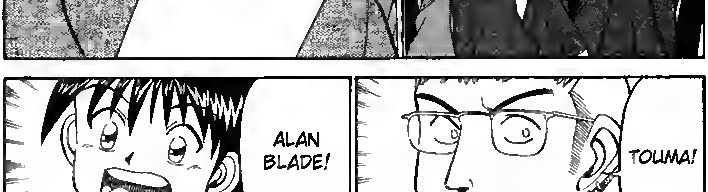
I'VE BEEN WORRYING ABOUT IT ALL THIS TIME...
ARGH! I'M TOO EMBARRASSED TO SEE HIM!
ウワー
ジタバタ

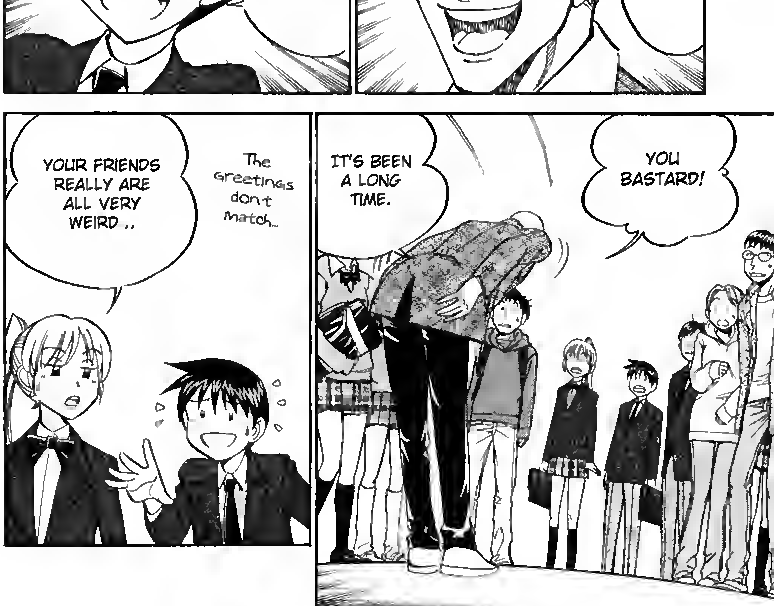
MIZUHARA -SAN.
BUT... I WOULD STILL SEE HIM AT SCHOOL ...
GOOD MORNING!
HE'S GREETING ME LIKE NOTHING WAS CHANGED!
AND AFTER THAT, HE TREATED ME THE WAY HE USUALLY DID.
.....

SO WHEN I HUGGED HIM...
IT DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING TO HIM.
MEANS NOTHING TO HIM...
SO IT STILL...

TOUMA-KUN! WHAT'S WRONG?
AREN'T YOU GOING HOME?
I WAS WAITING FOR YOU!
OH... RIGHT...
I REALLY CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT HE'S THINKING...
HUH?
IS THAT SOMEONE FAMOUS?
SCRITCH
WHO? WHO IS IT?
He's like he is on TV!



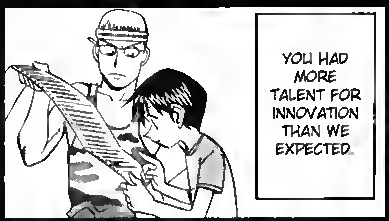

ALAN BLADE!
TOUMA!


YOUR FRIENDS REALLY ARE ALL VERY WEIRD ..
The greetings don't match..
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.
YOU BASTARD!

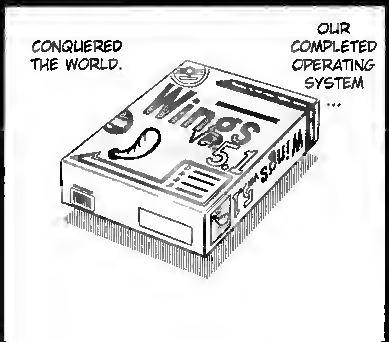
RETURN SOME-THING?
I'VE COME TODAY TO ASK YOU TO RETURN SOMETHING YOU BORROWED!
THAT'S RIGHT! DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE FORGOTTEN?
IT'S FROM 8 YEARS AGO!
WRONG!
Can't blame you for forgetting something like that.
A CD?
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO BE RETURNING?

IN A SMALL GARAGE, WE WERE DESPERATELY TRYING TO DEVELOP AN OS AN AVERAGE PERSON COULD USE
JUST AS THE COMPUTER ERA WAS BEGINNING...

AS IF IT WERE THE WARRING STATES PERIOD!
PERCEPTIVE GUYS WERE ENTERING THAT WORLD ONE AFTER ANOTHER.


YOU HAD MORE TALENT FOR INNOVATION THAN WE EXPECTED.

AND AT THAT TIME, YOU CAME TO HELP US.


OUR COMPLETED OPERATING SYSTEM ...
CONQUERED THE WORLD.
Wings 3.1

IF THIS PROJECT GOES WELL AND THE COMPANY GETS ON TRACK...
HEY, TOUMA ...
...I'LL THINK ABOUT IT!
Ha ha ha...
YOU MUST COME AND WORK FOR MY COMPANY AFTER YOU GRADUATE UNIVERSITY!
WENT TO JAPAN!
BUT, YOU JUST...
HUH?
EVEN THOUGH YOU ALREADY SAID YOU'D THINK ABOUT JOINING MY COMPANY!
YOU BIG LIAR!

HOW COULD YOU BETRAY ME!
TO REDEEM YOURSELF, YOU MUST HAVE A COMPETITION WITH ME.
?
A COMPETITION?
YOU MEAN A FISTFIGHT?
WOULDN'T I WIN IN 3 SECONDS?
ERR... UM...
IT'S ALMOST APRIL 1ST, APRIL FOOLS DAY ..
PEOPLE FROM AROUND THE WORLD TRICK EACH OTHER IT'S MY FAVORITE DAY!
LET'S HAVE THE COMPETITION ON THAT DAY!
IF I LOSE, I WILL FORGET ABOUT YOU.

AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP!?
BUT, IF YOU LOSE ...
YOU HAVE TO CHOOSE YOUR AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP!
YOUR PARENTS ARE JAPANESE, BUT YOU WERE BORN IN THE U.S. ...
IN OTHER WORDS, YOU HAVE TO DECIDE BETWEEN JAPANESE AND AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP WHEN YOU TURN 18!
IF I WIN, YOU MUST CHOOSE YOUR AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP AND COME AND WORK FOR MY COMPANY!

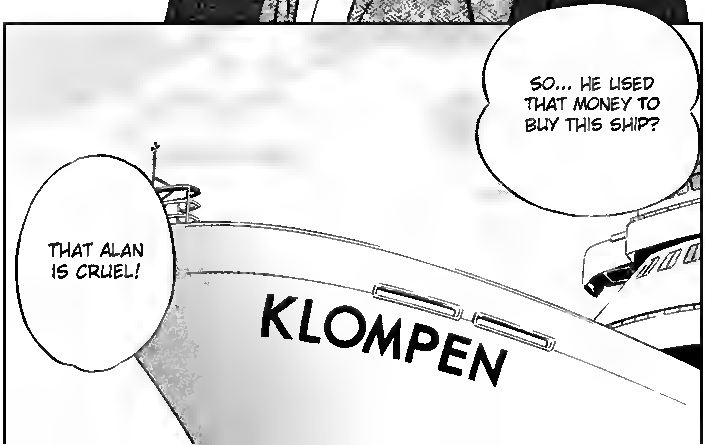
TOUMA-KUN IS GOING TO LEAVE JAPAN?
OF COURSE, I WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH A MOST GENEROUS PACKAGE: A HOUSE, A CAR AND EVEN A VACATION HOME!
I'M ALSO PREPARED TO PAY YOU A MORE THAN ADEQUATE ANNUAL SALARY.
WHAT IF I SAY NO?
I WON'T ALLOW IT
FOR EXAMPLE, YOU HAVE MANY PATENTS ...
WHAT IF I TAKE YOU TO COURT OVER THEM?
YOUR LIFE WILL BECOME A MESS!
I'M NOT ONLY RICH, I ALSO HAVE THE BEST LAWYERS...
DO YOU THINK I WON'T DO IT?

LET'S ENJOY THIS GAME!
IF YOU ACCEPT THE SITUATION, THEN WE'RE DONE TALKING.
AH... MR. BLADE!
YOU WERE HERE AFTER ALL!

AH! YOU'RE FROM THE VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION THAT I PROMISED TO DONATE TO!
I ASKED YOUR SECRETARY AND FINALLY FOUND YOU!
YES, I'M ONE OF THEIR STAFF.
ISN'T IT VERY CRUEL TO TAKE BACK A DONATION?!
YOU COULD COME SEE IT IF YOU LIKE...
HOW COULD THIS BE?
WHY DID YOU SUDDENLY CANCEL YOUR DONATION?
WHAT I BOUGHT IS ON DISPLAY AT THIS PLACE.
I CHANGED MY MIND! I SUDDENLY HAD THE URGE TO BUY SOMETHING...

I'M GOING! LOTS OF THINGS TO DO!
WHAT AM I GOING TO SAY TO EVERYONE
ALL THE PLANS WE MADE ARE OVER NOW...
.....
THIS PIECE OF PAPER
UM. . WHAT DID THAT ALAN GUY DO?
WHO ARE YOU?
Exhibition ends April 1st
LUXURY CRUISE SHIP ART EXHIBITION
Location
The port overlooking the park
Here
Train Station

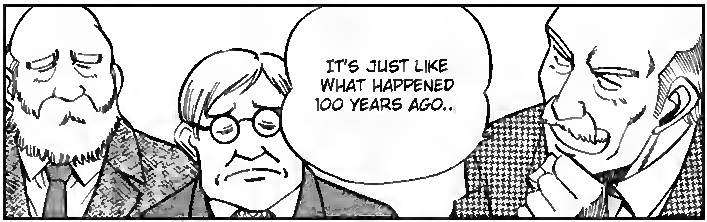
THAT MAN PROMISED YOU A DONATION TO YOUR VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION?
YES... BUT HE CANCELED IT SUDDENLY.

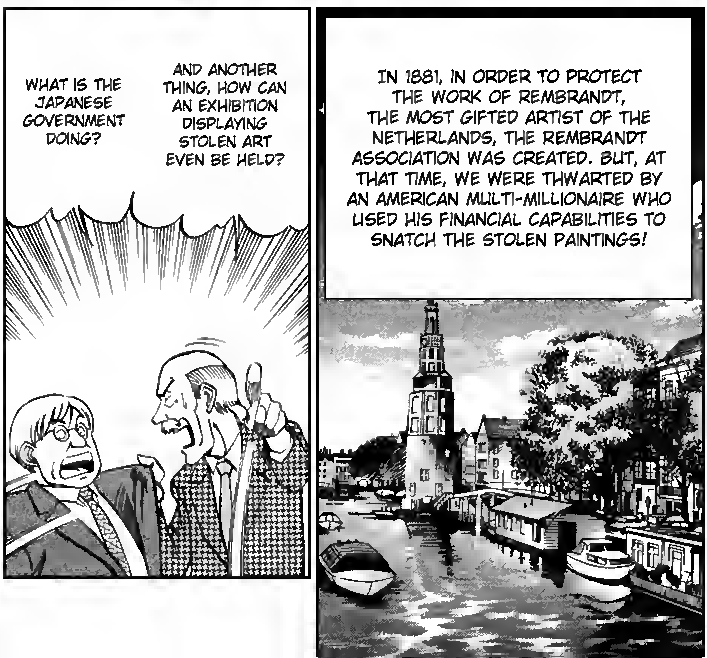

SO... HE USED THAT MONEY TO BUY THIS SHIP?
THAT ALAN IS CRUEL!
KLOMPEN

Luxury Cruise Ship
Exhibition Period - until April 1st
Rembrandt Art Exhibition on Board
WHAT ALAN BOUGHT WAS PAINTINGS!
THEY'RE PAINTINGS!
USING THE DONATION FUNDS TO BUY THESE...

DID HE REALLY NOT KNOW HOW DISAPPOINTED WE WOULD BE?
THIS IS EXTREMELY DISGRACEFUL!
AND THIS PARTICULAR PIECE MIGHT EVEN BE STOLEN...
THIS MAN IS COMPLETELY DISREGARDING THE EFFORTS OF THE NETHERLANDS REMBRANDT ASSOCIATION.
STOLEN?

THAT NOUVEAU RICHE ALAN BOUGHT IT BEFORE WE COULD.
WE FINALLY MANAGED TO TRACK DOWN THIS PAINTING AND WERE ABOUT TO PURCHASE IT FROM THE DEALER WHEN...


IT'S JUST LIKE WHAT HAPPENED 100 YEARS AGO..


WHAT IS THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT DOING?
AND ANOTHER THING, HOW CAN AN EXHIBITION DISPLAYING STOLEN ART EVEN BE HELD?
IN 1881, IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE WORK OF REMBRANDT, THE MOST GIFTED ARTIST OF THE NETHERLANDS, THE REMBRANDT ASSOCIATION WAS CREATED. BUT, AT THAT TIME, WE WERE THWARTED BY AN AMERICAN MULTI-MILLIONAIRE WHO USED HIS FINANCIAL CAPABILITIES TO SNATCH THE STOLEN PAINTINGS!

MR. BLADE WAS UNAWARE THAT THIS PIECE COULD HAVE BEEN STOLEN PROPERTY WHEN HE BOUGHT IT, SO I DO NOT THINK IT NEEDS TO BE RETURNED.
ALSO, MR. BLADE HAS A LOT OF CLOUT IN THE JAPANESE-AMERICAN FINANCIAL WORLD.
THE DUTCH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN WENT TO PROTEST.
.....
IF POSSIBLE, WE WOULD LIKE TO AVOID STIRRING UP TROUBLE WITHIN JAPAN..
THAT GUY KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN, THAT'S WHY HE SET IT UP HERE...
DAMN IT! THAT AMERICA FLUNKY...
SO JAPAN SAID THEY WON'T HELP US?

TOUMA -KUN!
THAT ALAN IS CREATING TROUBLE FOR EVERYONE!
HOW DETEST-ABLE...
LET'S GO AND STEAL THAT PAINTING!
IT'S FINE! I'M AUTHORIZING IT!
STEALING AN EXPENSIVE ITEM LIKE THIS IS NOT A JOKE!
WHAT IS THIS ALL OF A SUDDEN? THAT WOULD MAKE ME A THIEF!
ISN'T IT OK SINCE YOU'RE COMPETING OVER TRICKING OTHER PEOPLE ANYWAY?

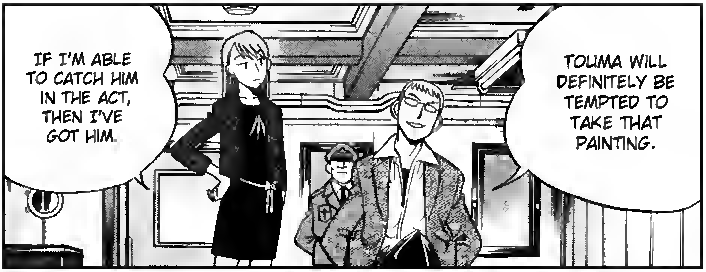
IF THAT'S TRUE, THEN ISN'T THIS SITUATION YOUR RESPONSIBILITY?

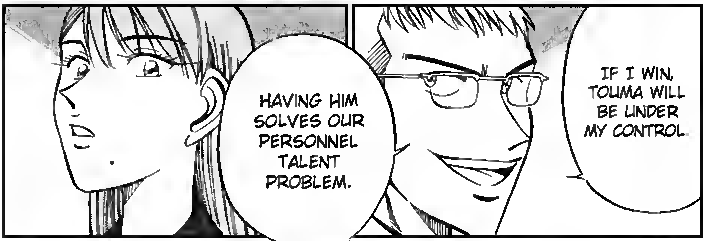
ALAN PROBABLY BOUGHT THE PAINTING BECAUSE HE WANTED A SHOWDOWN WITH YOU!

THAT'S UNREASON-ABLE!
THEN IT'S YOUR DUTY TO COME UP WITH SOME-THING!

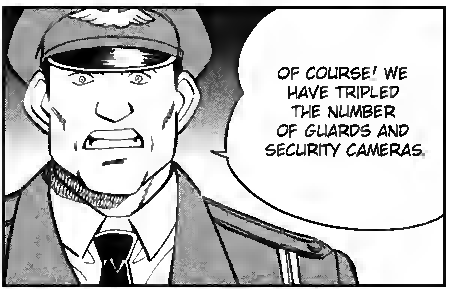
THOSE TWO ARE ARGUING!
HEH HEH HEH!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT' THAT WAS PART OF MY PLAN AS WELL.
BUT... WAS IT OKAY FOR ME TO TELL THE VOLUNTEER WHERE YOU WERE?
BUT ACCORDING TO MY INVESTIGATION, THAT GIRL WOULD NEVER LEAVE IT BE.
COOL AND COLLECTED TOUMA WOULD PROBABLY IGNORE THE APPEARANCE OF A PITIFUL VOLUNTEER...
STUPID FISH ARE ALWAYS ATTRACTED BY FAKE BAIT...
AND TOUMA'S WEAK POINT IS THAT GIRL!


IF I'M ABLE TO CATCH HIM IN THE ACT, THEN I'VE GOT HIM.
TOUMA WILL DEFINITELY BE TEMPTED TO TAKE THAT PAINTING.


HAVING HIM SOLVES OUR PERSONNEL TALENT PROBLEM.
IF I WIN, TOUMA WILL BE UNDER MY CONTROL.

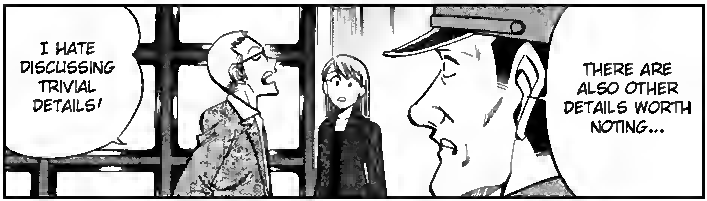
ARE THE NECESSARY SAFETY PRECAUTIONS IN PLACE?
HEAD OF SECURITY!

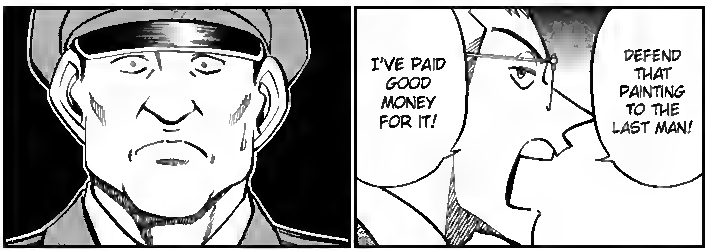

OF COURSE! WE HAVE TRIPLED THE NUMBER OF GUARDS AND SECURITY CAMERAS.

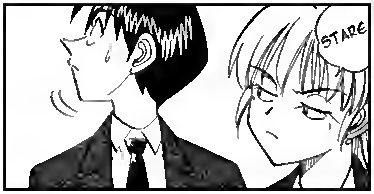
BUT.. ELLIE, WHY DID YOU CHARTER A SHIP FOR THIS EXHIBITION?
IT WAS THE ONLY WAY. YOU CAN'T EXHIBIT POSSIBLY STOLEN PAINTINGS AT AN ART GALLERY.

TO PREVENT INTRUSIONS FROM THE OUTSIDE.
AND TONIGHT WE'LL ANCHOR 5 KM AWAY FROM THE DOCK...

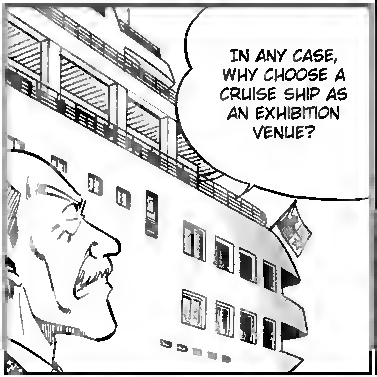
NORMAL BOATS CAN'T CATCH UP TO IT.
KLOMPEN
THIS IS ALSO A HIGH-SPEED SHIP CAPABLE OF ACHIEVING 32 KNOTS.

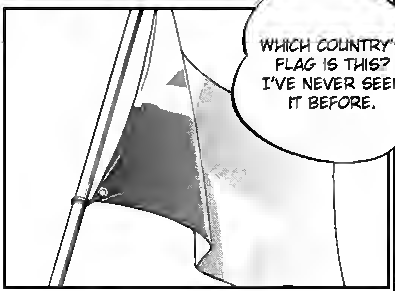

I HATE DISCUSSING TRIVIAL DETAILS!
THERE ARE ALSO OTHER DETAILS WORTH NOTING...

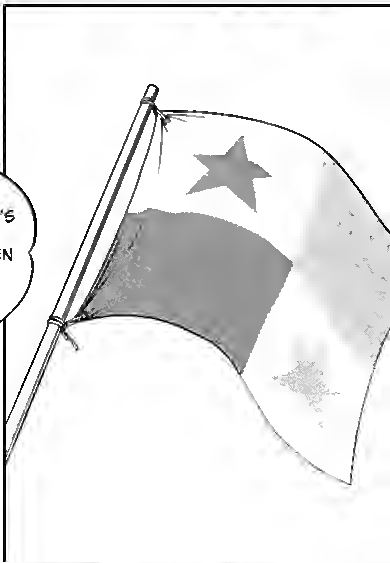

I'VE PAID GOOD MONEY FOR IT!
DEFEND THAT PAINTING TO THE LAST MAN!

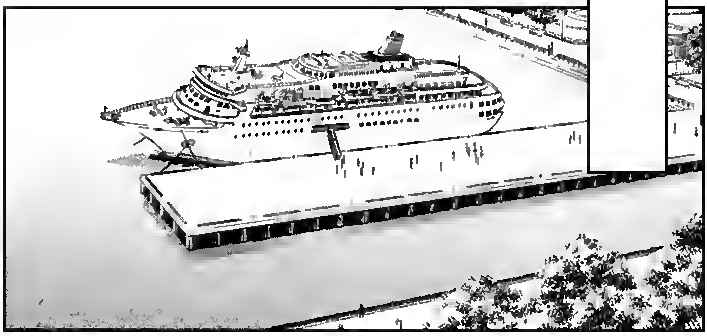

STARE

I AM OUT-RAGED!
CAN'T SOMEONE DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT ARROGANT UPSTART WHO WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OTHER PEOPLE?

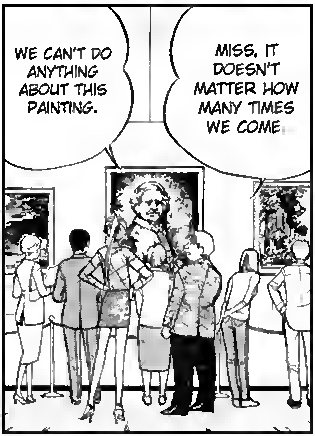

IN ANY CASE, WHY CHOOSE A CRUISE SHIP AS AN EXHIBITION VENUE?

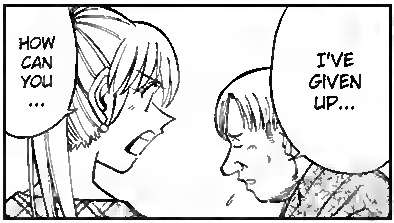

WHICH COUNTRY'S FLAG IS THIS? I'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE.

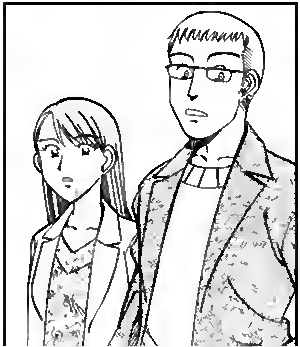


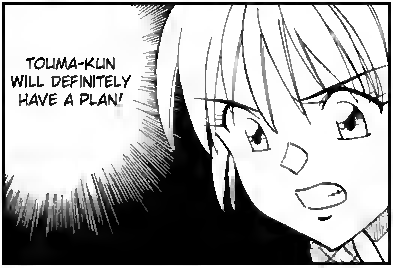


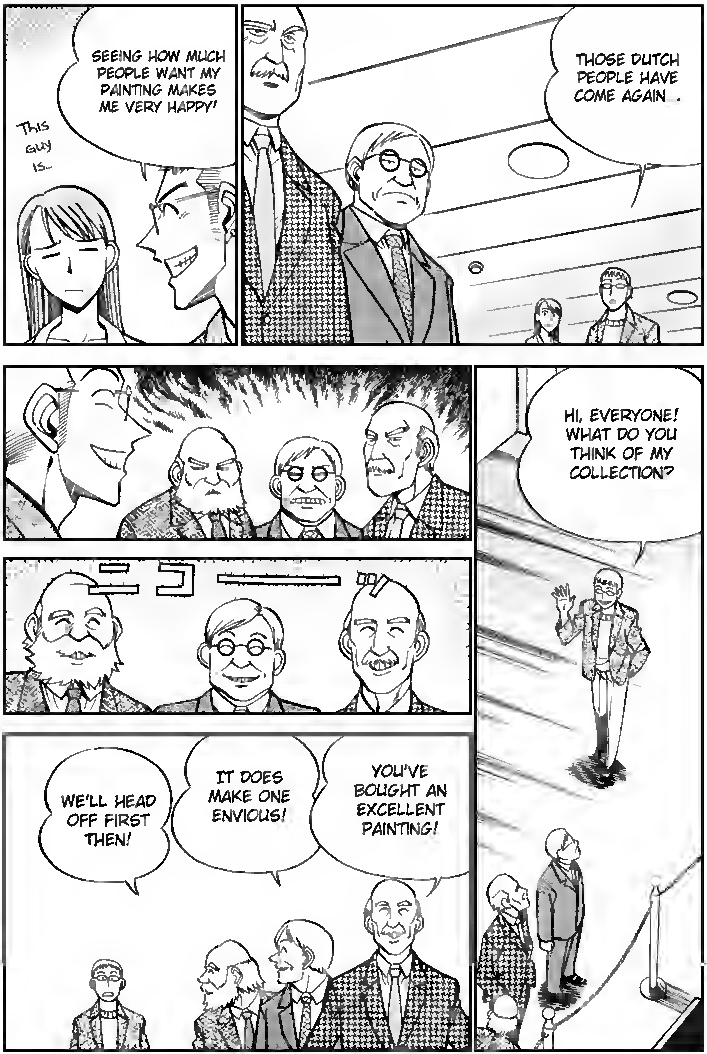
JUST GOING BY THE NUMBER OF GUARDS...


WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT THIS PAINTING.
MISS, IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MANY TIMES WE COME.

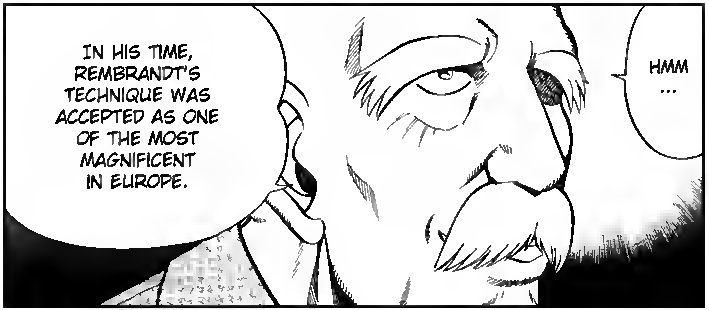

HOW CAN YOU ...
I'VE GIVEN UP...

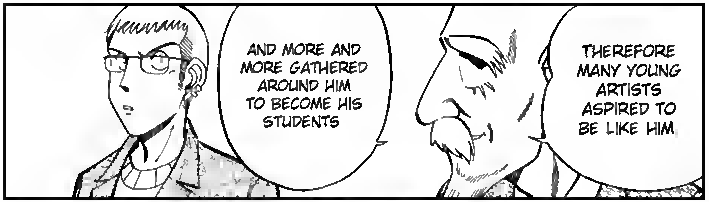


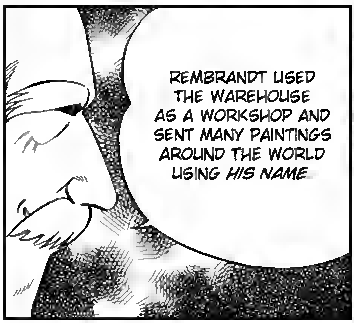

TOUMA-KUN WILL DEFINITELY HAVE A PLAN!

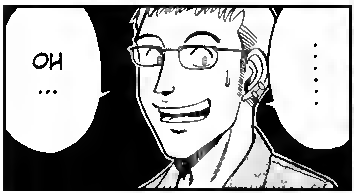

SEEING HOW MUCH PEOPLE WANT MY PAINTING MAKES ME VERY HAPPY!
This guy is...
THOSE DUTCH PEOPLE HAVE COME AGAIN .
HI, EVERYONE! WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MY COLLECTION?
YOU'VE BOUGHT AN EXCELLENT PAINTING!
IT DOES MAKE ONE ENVIOUS!
WE'LL HEAD OFF FIRST THEN!

THOSE MEN WERE SO ANGRY JUST NOW, WHAT HAPPENED?
?
IS THIS THE PAINTING YOU BOUGHT?
OH... YES!
IT IS A VERY GOOD ONE!
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ART, BUT I HAD A FEELING THAT IT WAS VERY WELL DONE.

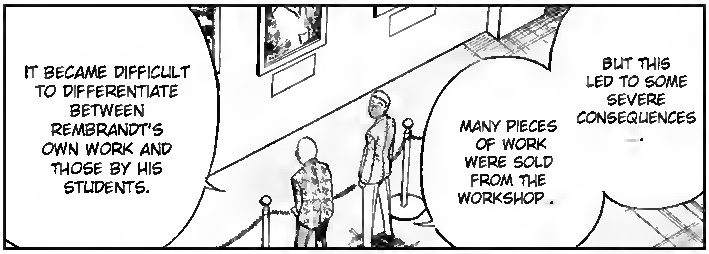

IN HIS TIME, REMBRANDT'S TECHNIQUE WAS ACCEPTED AS ONE OF THE MOST MAGNIFICENT IN EUROPE.
HMM ...


AND MORE AND MORE GATHERED AROUND HIM TO BECOME HIS STUDENTS
THEREFORE MANY YOUNG ARTISTS ASPIRED TO BE LIKE HIM.

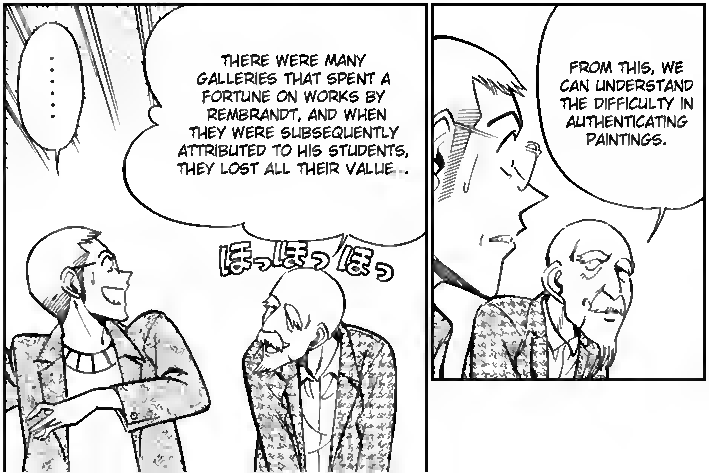

REMBRANDT USED THE WAREHOUSE AS A WORKSHOP AND SENT MANY PAINTINGS AROUND THE WORLD USING *HIS NAME*.


OH ...
.....

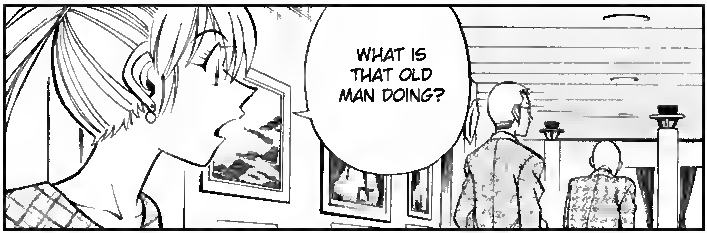
THESE STUDENTS LIVED IN A WAREHOUSE WHILE THEY STUDIED REMBRANDT'S PAINTINGS.

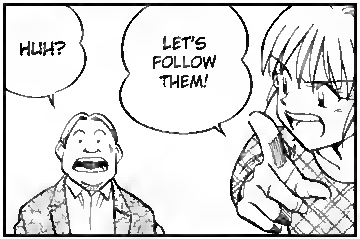

IT BECAME DIFFICULT TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN REMBRANDT'S OWN WORK AND THOSE BY HIS STUDENTS.
MANY PIECES OF WORK WERE SOLD FROM THE WORKSHOP.
BUT THIS LED TO SOME SEVERE CONSEQUENCES.

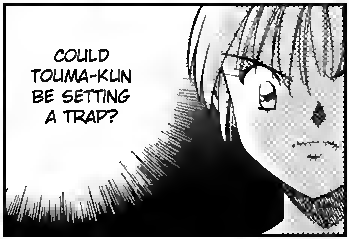
WAS INVESTIGATED AND TURNED OUT TO BE BY HIS STUDENT.
FOR EXAMPLE, IN 1985, "MAN IN A GOLDEN HELMET", A PIECE OF WORK BELIEVED TO BE REMBRANDT'S MASTERPIECE...


.....
THERE WERE MANY GALLERIES THAT SPENT A FORTUNE ON WORKS BY REMBRANDT, AND WHEN THEY WERE SUBSEQUENTLY ATTRIBUTED TO HIS STUDENTS, THEY LOST ALL THEIR VALUE..
FROM THIS, WE CAN UNDERSTAND THE DIFFICULTY IN AUTHENTICATING PAINTINGS.

IS THIS PAINTING GENUINE?
AH, SIR...
DO YOU HAVE TIME?
THERE ARE MANY INTERESTING THINGS FOR YOU TO LOOK AT!
IF YOU LIKE, WHY NOT VISIT MY VILLA?
.....
IT'S NEARBY.

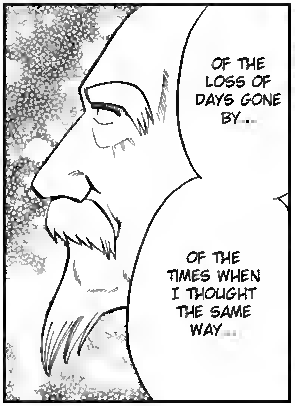

WHAT IS THAT OLD MAN DOING?


HUH?
LET'S FOLLOW THEM!

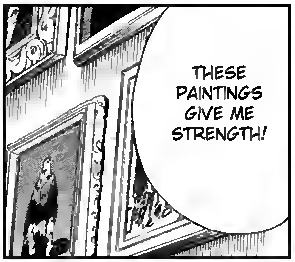

COULD TOUMA-KUN BE SETTING A TRAP?

ARE THESE ...
ALL BY REMBRANDT?!
WHAT?
NO, THEY ARE ALL BY HIS STUDENTS.

ACCORDING TO SOCIETY'S STANDARD, THEY ARE
WHY WOULD YOU COLLECT THESE!?
AREN'T THESE ALL FAKE!?
BUT, I DON'T THINK SO.
YES ...
ARE THE RESULT OF ASPIRING TO BE LIKE REMBRANDT. THEY ARE THE CRYSTALLIZATION OF THE DREAMS OF YOUNG MEN TO BECOME MATURE PAINTERS.
ALL OF THE WORKS HERE..
I CAN FEEL THE STRENGTH OF THEIR DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE.
THE STROKES OF THE BRUSH ON THE CANVAS IS A MESSAGE. .


OF THE LOSS OF DAYS GONE BY...
OF THE TIMES WHEN I THOUGHT THE SAME WAY...

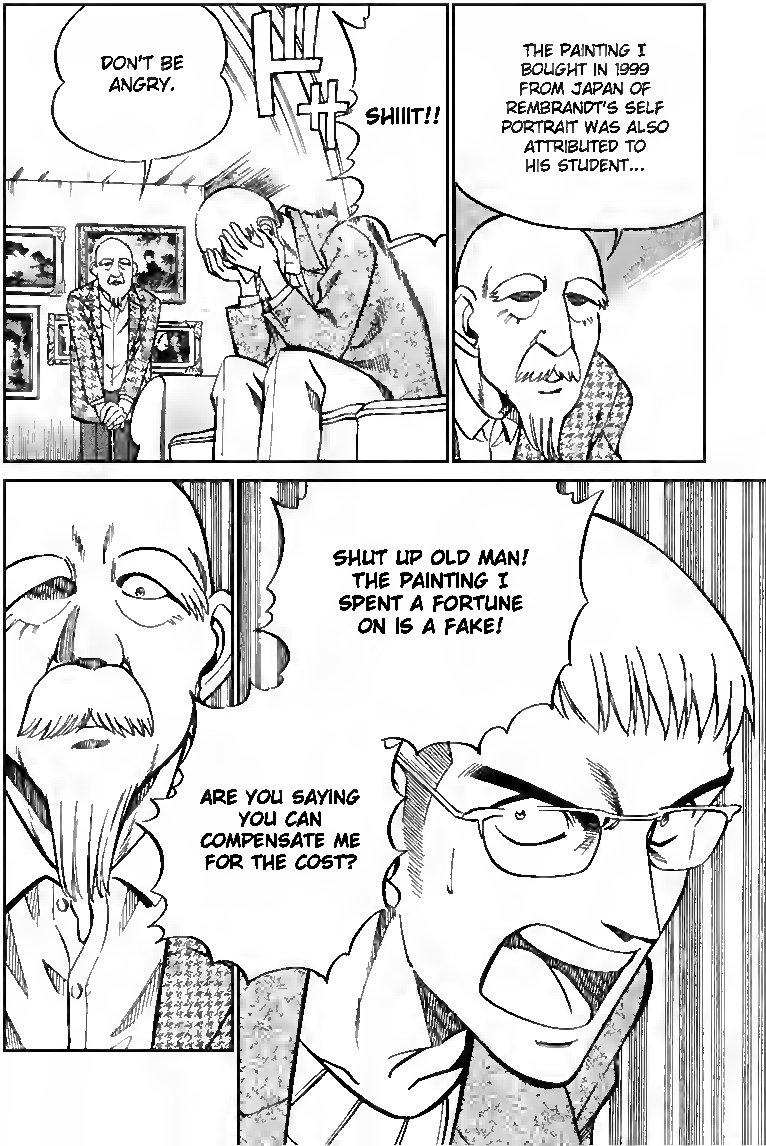
EVERY TIME I COME HERE, IT REMINDS ME...

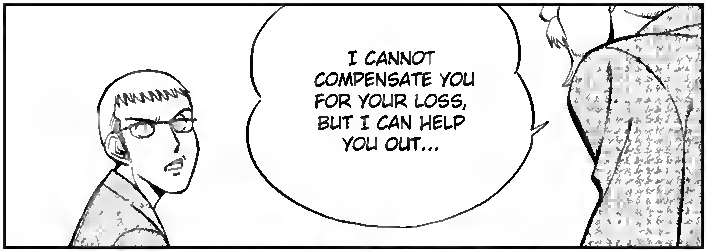

THESE PAINTINGS GIVE ME STRENGTH!

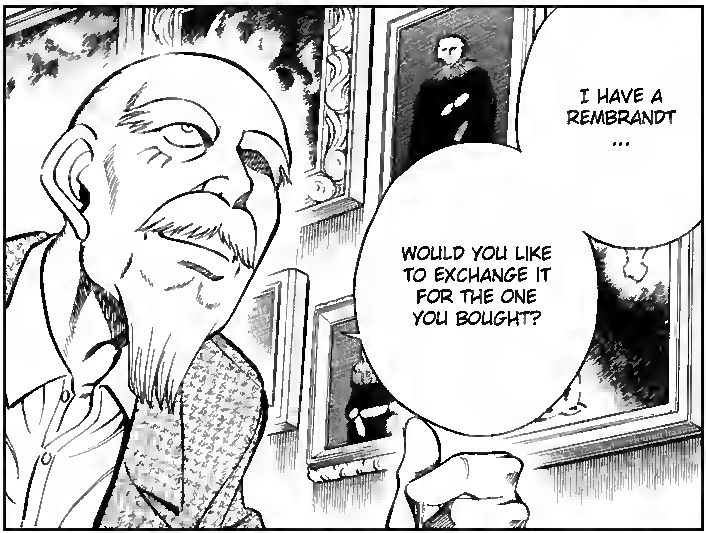
.....

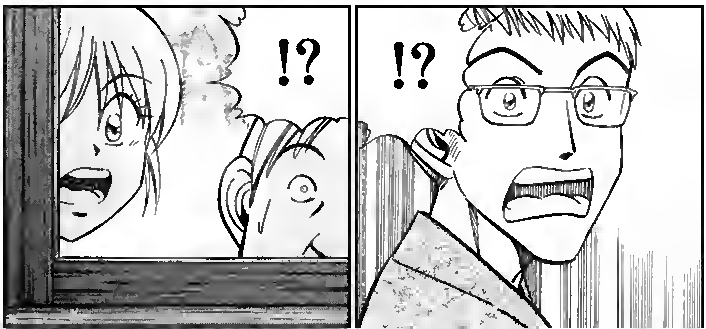
HENCE I LIKE TO COLLECT WORKS BY STUDENTS.

HERE! THEY'RE HERE!
IS IT ...
SO THE PAINTING I BOUGHT...
I AM VERY SORRY...
IT IS THE WORK OF A STUDENT.
HOW CAN IT BE THE WORK OF A STUDENT?
BU... BUT I BOUGHT REMBRANDT'S SELF-PORTRAIT!
.....

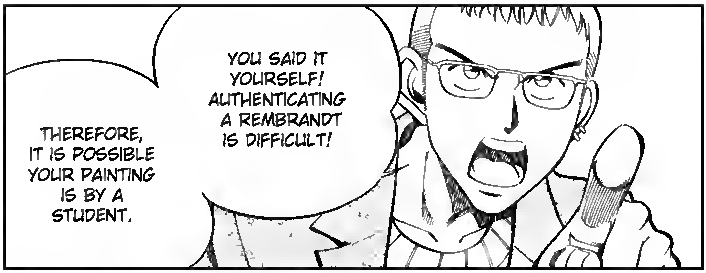

DON'T BE ANGRY.
SHIIIT!!
THE PAINTING I BOUGHT IN 1999 FROM JAPAN OF REMBRANDT'S SELF PORTRAIT WAS ALSO ATTRIBUTED TO HIS STUDENT...
SHUT UP OLD MAN! THE PAINTING I SPENT A FORTUNE ON IS A FAKE!
ARE YOU SAYING YOU CAN COMPENSATE ME FOR THE COST?

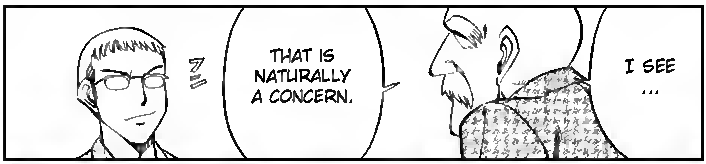

I CANNOT COMPENSATE YOU FOR YOUR LOSS, BUT I CAN HELP YOU OUT...


I HAVE A REMBRANDT ...
WOULD YOU LIKE TO EXCHANGE IT FOR THE ONE YOU BOUGHT?

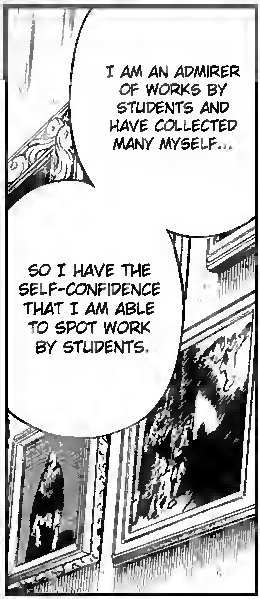

!?
!?

YES, IT IS... BUT WHY?
HOW ABOUT IT? THIS DEAL IS PRETTY GOOD, YES?
A WORTHLESS FAKE IN YOUR EYES IS THE OPPOSITE FOR ME!
DIDN'T I SAY IT JUST NOW? I LIKE PAINTINGS BY STUDENTS!
HMM ...
IS THE REMBRANDT YOU'RE EXCHANGING WITH ME AUTHENTIC?
HANG ON A SEC!

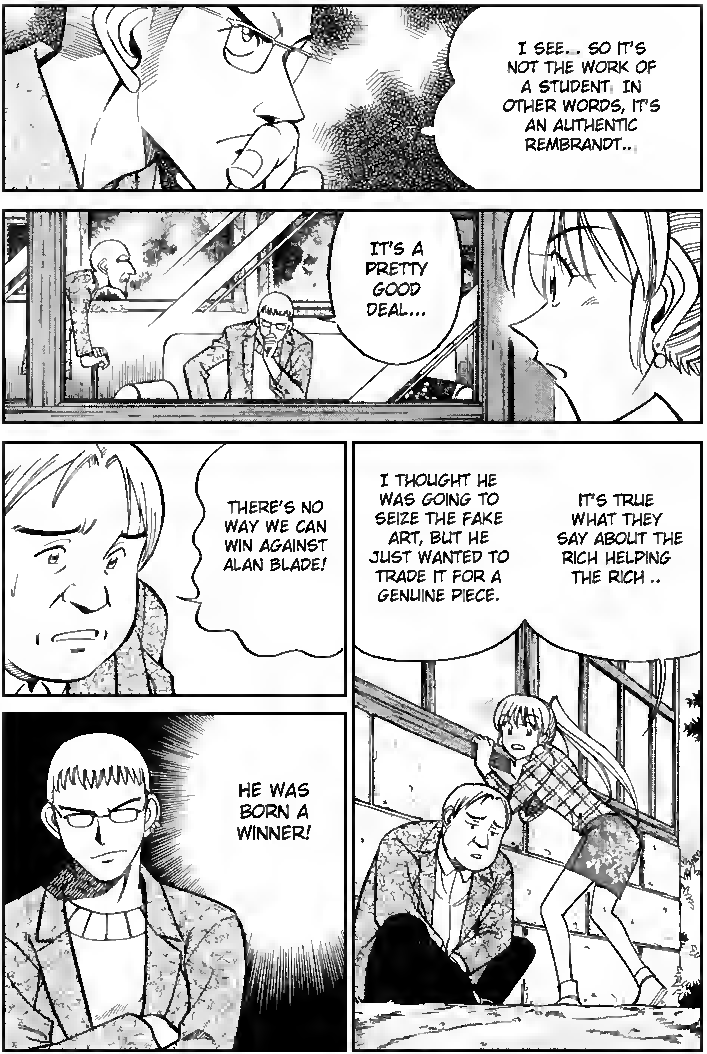

YOU SAID IT YOURSELF! AUTHENTICATING A REMBRANDT IS DIFFICULT!
THEREFORE, IT IS POSSIBLE YOUR PAINTING IS BY A STUDENT.


I SEE ...
THAT IS NATURALLY A CONCERN.

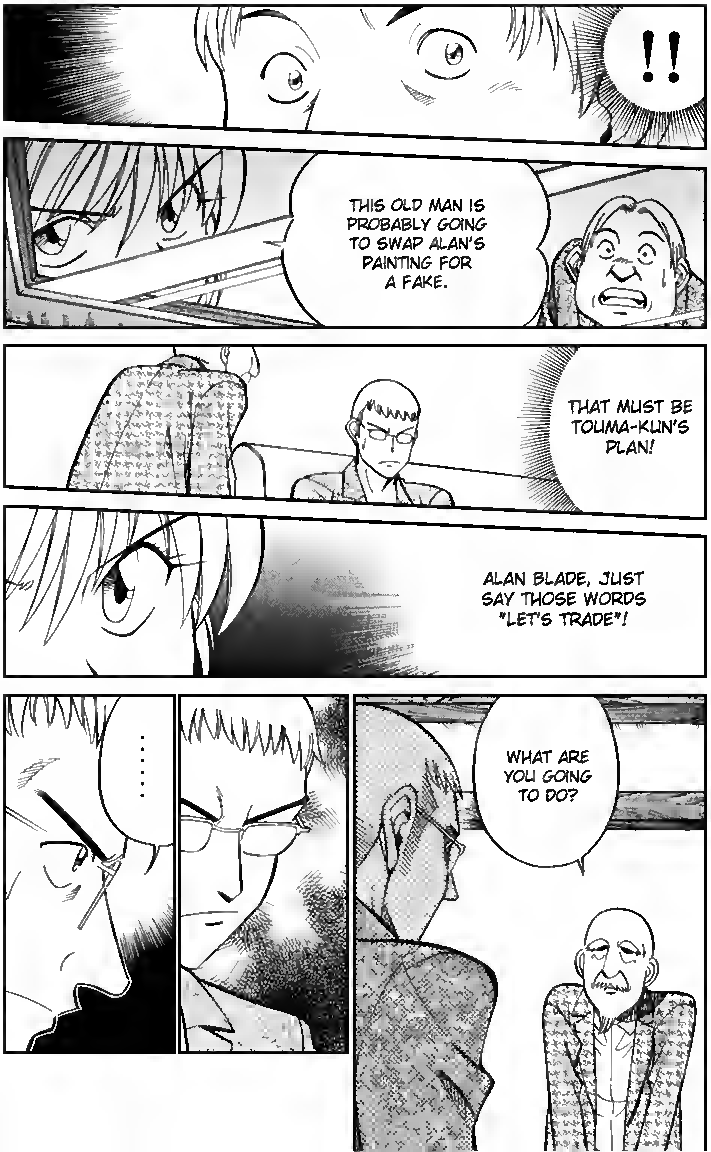
I CAN GUARANTEE ...

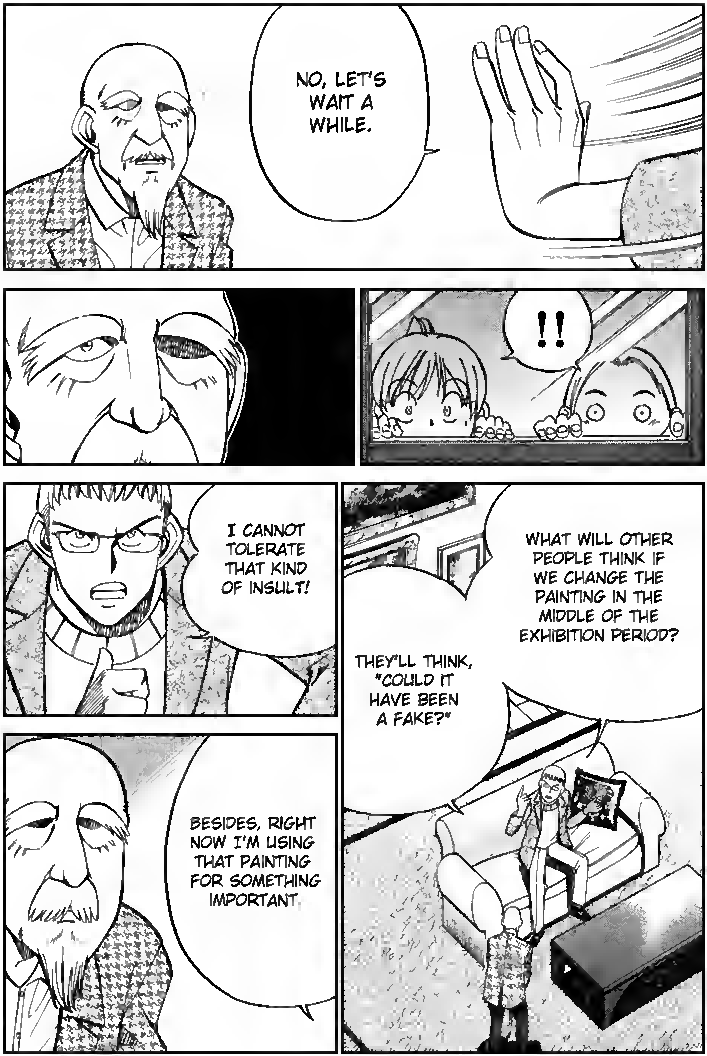

I AM AN ADMIRER OF WORKS BY STUDENTS AND HAVE COLLECTED MANY MYSELF...
SO I HAVE THE SELF-CONFIDENCE THAT I AM ABLE TO SPOT WORK BY STUDENTS.

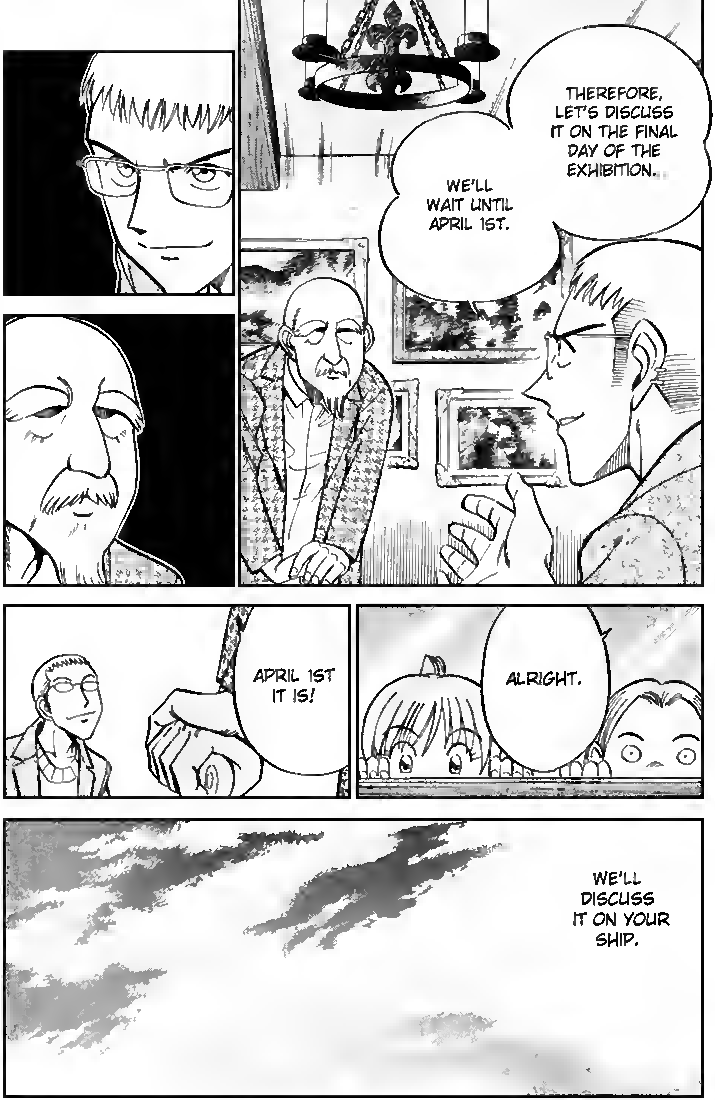
THAT THE PAINTING I AM EXCHANGING WITH YOU IS DEFINITELY NOT BY A STUDENT!

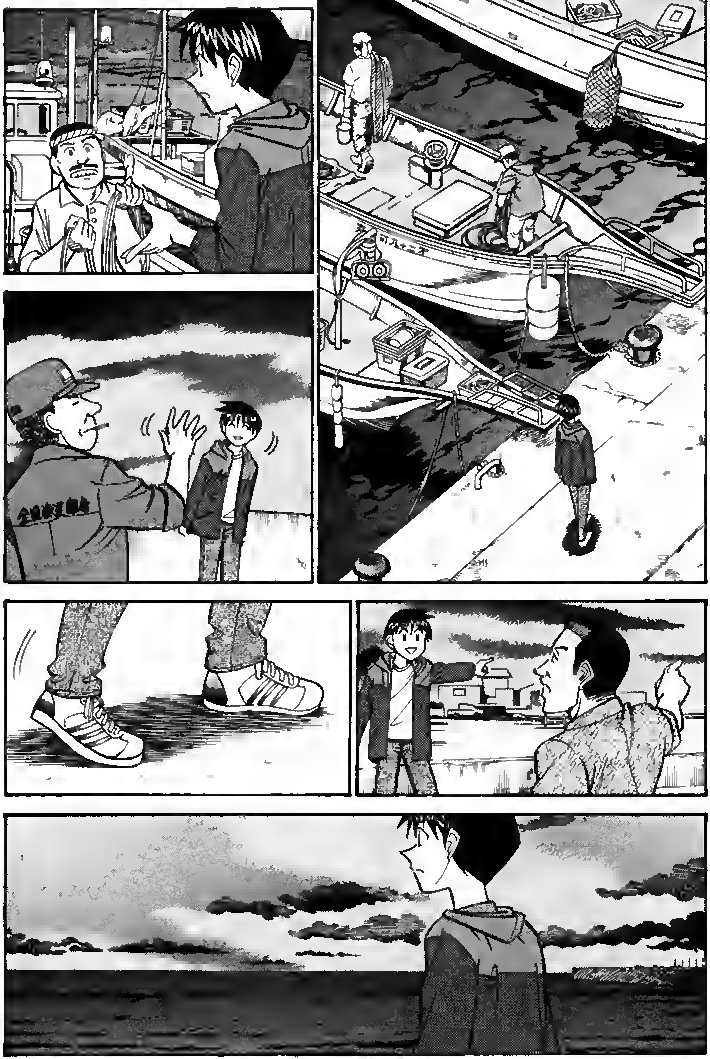

I SEE... SO IT'S NOT THE WORK OF A STUDENT. IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S AN AUTHENTIC REMBRANDT..
IT'S A PRETTY GOOD DEAL...
THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN WIN AGAINST ALAN BLADE!
I THOUGHT HE WAS GOING TO SEIZE THE FAKE ART, BUT HE JUST WANTED TO TRADE IT FOR A GENUINE PIECE.
IT'S TRUE WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT THE RICH HELPING THE RICH ..
HE WAS BORN A WINNER!

I DON'T THINK SO!
I HAVE TO GIVE UP...
HE SAID, "THE PAINTING I WANT TO EXCHANGE WITH YOU IS DEFINITELY NOT BY A STUDENT!"
HAVEN'T YOU NOTICED HOW THE OLD MAN PHRASED HIS WORDS?
THE WAY IT HAS BEEN PHRASED MEANS IT COULD BE A FAKE BY SOMEONE *OTHER* THAN REMBRANDT OR HIS STUDENTS.
THAT MEANS THAT IT MIGHT NOT BE A REMBRANDT!

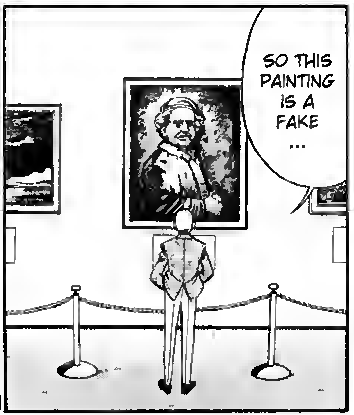

!!
THIS OLD MAN IS PROBABLY GOING TO SWAP ALAN'S PAINTING FOR A FAKE.
THAT MUST BE TOUMA-KUN'S PLAN!
ALAN BLADE, JUST SAY THOSE WORDS "LET'S TRADE"!
.....
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

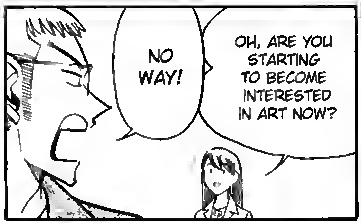

NO, LET'S WAIT A WHILE.
!!
I CANNOT TOLERATE THAT KIND OF INSULT!
WHAT WILL OTHER PEOPLE THINK IF WE CHANGE THE PAINTING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE EXHIBITION PERIOD?
THEY'LL THINK, "COULD IT HAVE BEEN A FAKE?"
BESIDES, RIGHT NOW I'M USING THAT PAINTING FOR SOMETHING IMPORTANT.

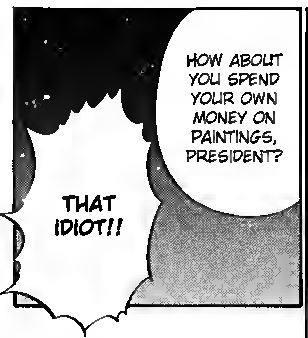

WE'LL WAIT UNTIL APRIL 1ST.
THEREFORE, LET'S DISCUSS IT ON THE FINAL DAY OF THE EXHIBITION.
APRIL 1ST IT IS!
ALRIGHT.
WE'LL DISCUSS IT ON YOUR SHIP.



EXCHANGING IT WITH AN AUTHENTIC PIECE, HUH?


SO THIS PAINTING IS A FAKE ...

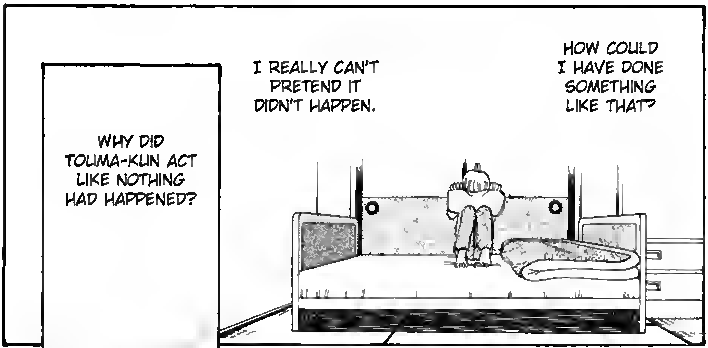

NO WAY!
OH, ARE YOU STARTING TO BECOME INTERESTED IN ART NOW?


HOW ABOUT YOU SPEND YOUR OWN MONEY ON PAINTINGS, PRESIDENT?
THAT IDIOT!!

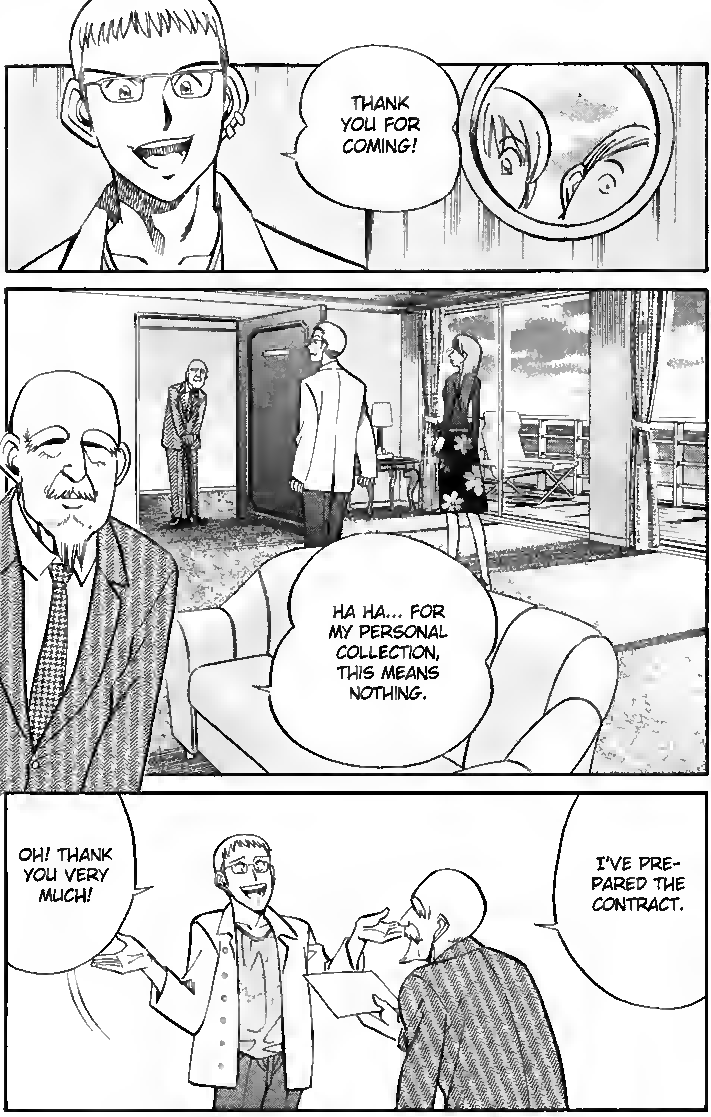
I JUST FEEL LIKE I AM THE REAL WINNER!

IT COMES TO AN END ON APRIL 1ST!
IT'S ALL ABOUT TOMORROW!
TOUMA-KUN IS GOING TO TAKE THE PAINTING FROM THAT GUY!

IT'S NO GOOD... I STILL FEEL DEPRESSED...


WHY DID TOUMA-KUN ACT LIKE NOTHING HAD HAPPENED?
I REALLY CAN'T PRETEND IT DIDN'T HAPPEN.
HOW COULD I HAVE DONE SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

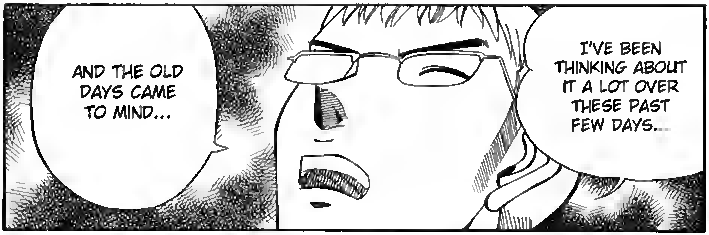
April
1st
Rembrandt
Art Exhibition
Ends Today

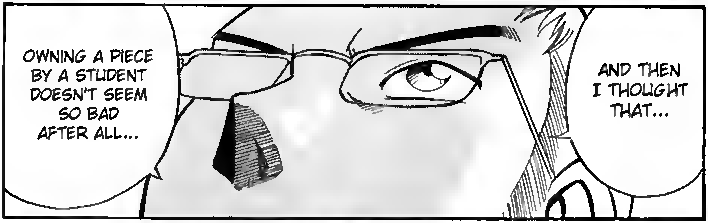

THANK YOU FOR COMING!
HA HA... FOR MY PERSONAL COLLECTION, THIS MEANS NOTHING.
I'VE PREPARED THE CONTRACT.
OH! THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

WELL, I DON'T NEED THAT FAKE PAINTING ANY MORE.
PLEASE TAKE A SEAT!
YOU JUST HAVE TO SIGN HERE FOR THE CONTRACT TO TAKE EFFECT!
トス
HA HA HA! THAT IS TRUE!
AH, THAT'S VERY KIND OF YOU.
ELLIE! BRING THE DRINKS OVER!
OH, DO I JUST SIGN HERE?
THIS IS SO AGGRA-VATING...
HURRY UP AND SIGN IT!

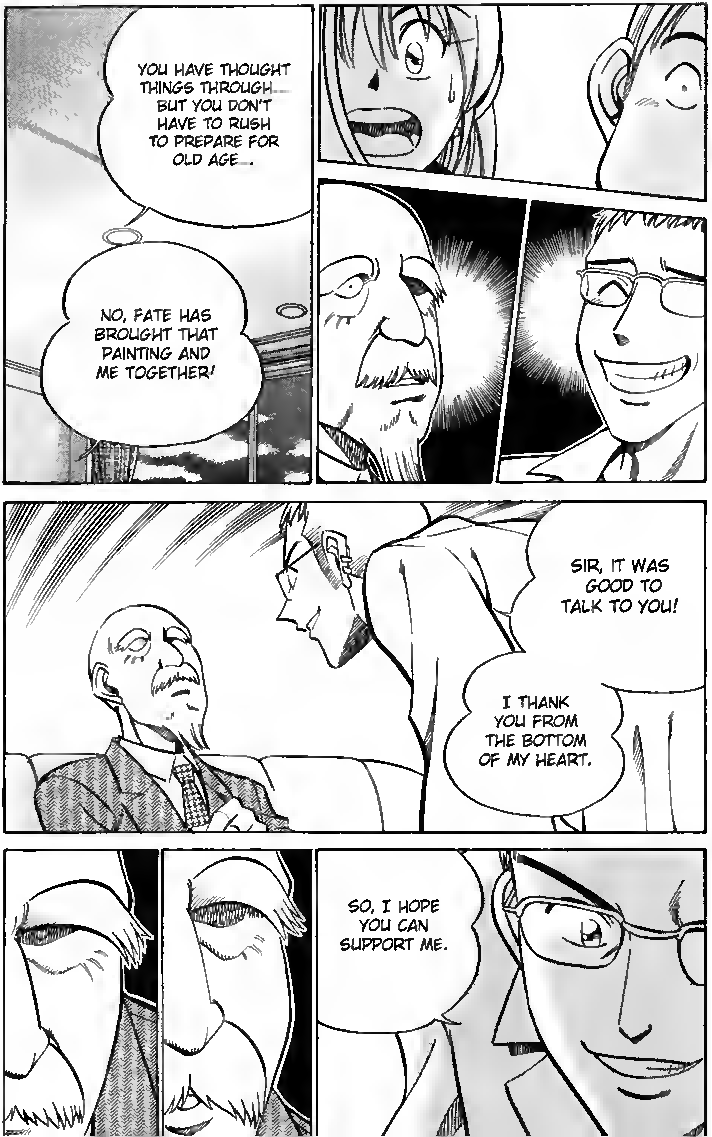
SORRY ABOUT THAT...
HERE YOU GO.
WHERE'S MY PEN?
HUH?
I'M SENDING HIM THOUGHT WAVES!
SIIGGGNN IT!
WHAT IS SHE DOING?
Hit it!
MY DAD OFTEN DOES THIS WHEN WATCHING BASEBALL ON TV.
. . . . . .
THAT WAS A LITTLE TOO EFFEC-TIVE.
THE INK SPURTED OUT!
AAAGH!
HA HA...
HERE'S A DUPLICATE COPY!

BUT, SIR, EVEN IF THEY ARE FAKES, YOU REALLY HAVE COLLECTED A LOT!
NOT REALLY, NOTHING LIKE THAT ...
YOU MUST BE A VERY SUCCESSFUL PERSON!
YOU MUST HAVE SPENT A LOT OF MONEY.
AH! DON'T BE MODEST. YOU MUST HAVE BEEN JUST LIKE ME WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG, A WINNER!
WILL I BE LIKE YOU ONE DAY AND BEGIN TO REMINISCE ABOUT THE PAST?
SO I BEGAN TO WONDER ..


I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT A LOT OVER THESE PAST FEW DAYS...
AND THE OLD DAYS CAME TO MIND...


AND THEN I THOUGHT THAT...
OWNING A PIECE BY A STUDENT DOESN'T SEEM SO BAD AFTER ALL...

SO LET'S JUST FORGET THIS DEAL!

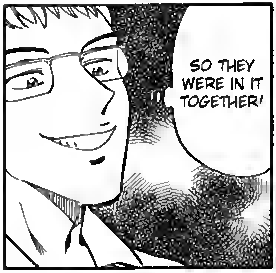

YOU HAVE THOUGHT THINGS THROUGH... BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO RUSH TO PREPARE FOR OLD AGE...
NO, FATE HAS BROUGHT THAT PAINTING AND ME TOGETHER!
SIR, IT WAS GOOD TO TALK TO YOU!
I THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART.
SO, I HOPE YOU CAN SUPPORT ME.

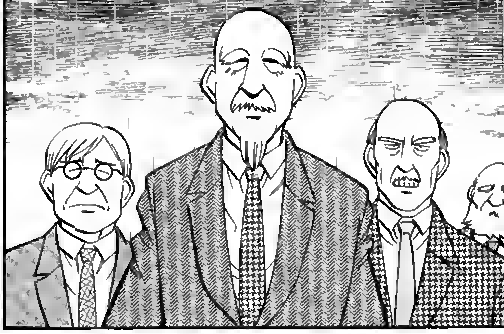
IF THOSE ARE YOUR TRUE THOUGHTS, THEN THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO...
PLEASE TREASURE THIS PAINTING!
IS THIS REALLY A GOOD IDEA?
WE'RE LETTING GO OF THE CHANCE TO GET AN AUTHENTIC REMBRANDT..

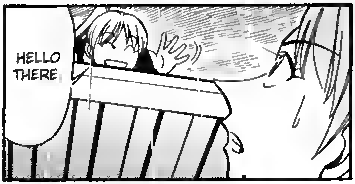
IT'S TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE.
IF I REJECT HIM AT THE LAST MOMENT, TOUMA CAN'T MAKE ANOTHER MOVE, RIGHT?
THIS IS MY TRICK!
CRAP! WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT HE'D BE SO CLEVER!
THAT WAS PROBABLY TOUMA'S TRICK.
WHO WOULD FALL FOR SUCH A THING?

ELLIE, TODAY IS A GOOD DAY!
REALLY?
I THINK IT'S ABOUT TO RAIN...
...
ARRGH! IT'S OVER!
APRIL 1ST IS ALMOST OVER...
PITTER
PATTER

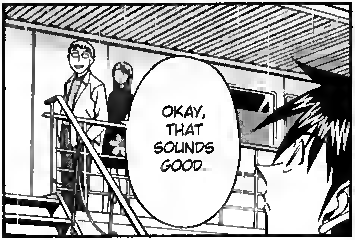
!!
!
AFTER WE LAUNCH THE BOAT, WE'LL START THE DINNER PARTY.
HI! TOUMA, YOU'RE LATE!
CAN I BE INVITED?
THE EXHIBITION IS OVER!
AND THESE PEOPLE TOO!

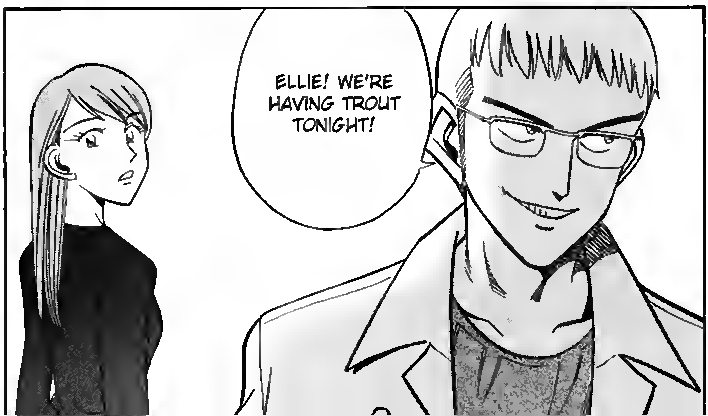

SO THEY WERE IN IT TOGETHER!

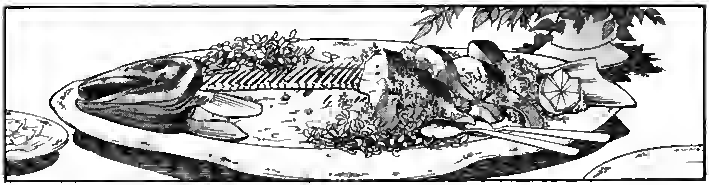


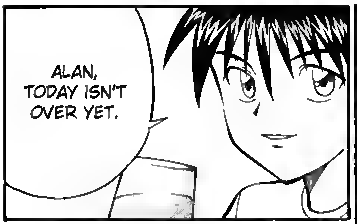

HELLO THERE.

MIZUHARA-SAN AND THE VOLUNTEER UP THERE ARE ALSO WELCOME!

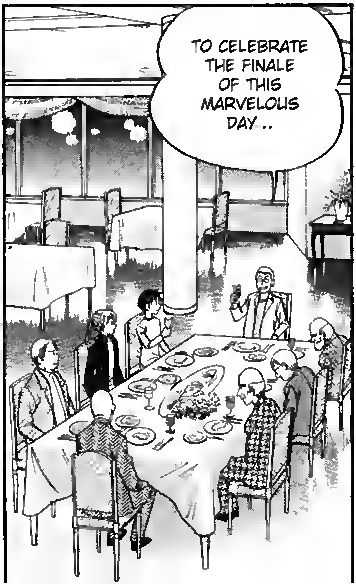

OKAY, THAT SOUNDS GOOD.


ELLIE! WE'RE HAVING TROUT TONIGHT!




ALAN, TODAY ISN'T OVER YET.

WHAT DOES IT MATTER? IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE.


TO CELEBRATE THE FINALE OF THIS MARVELOUS DAY..

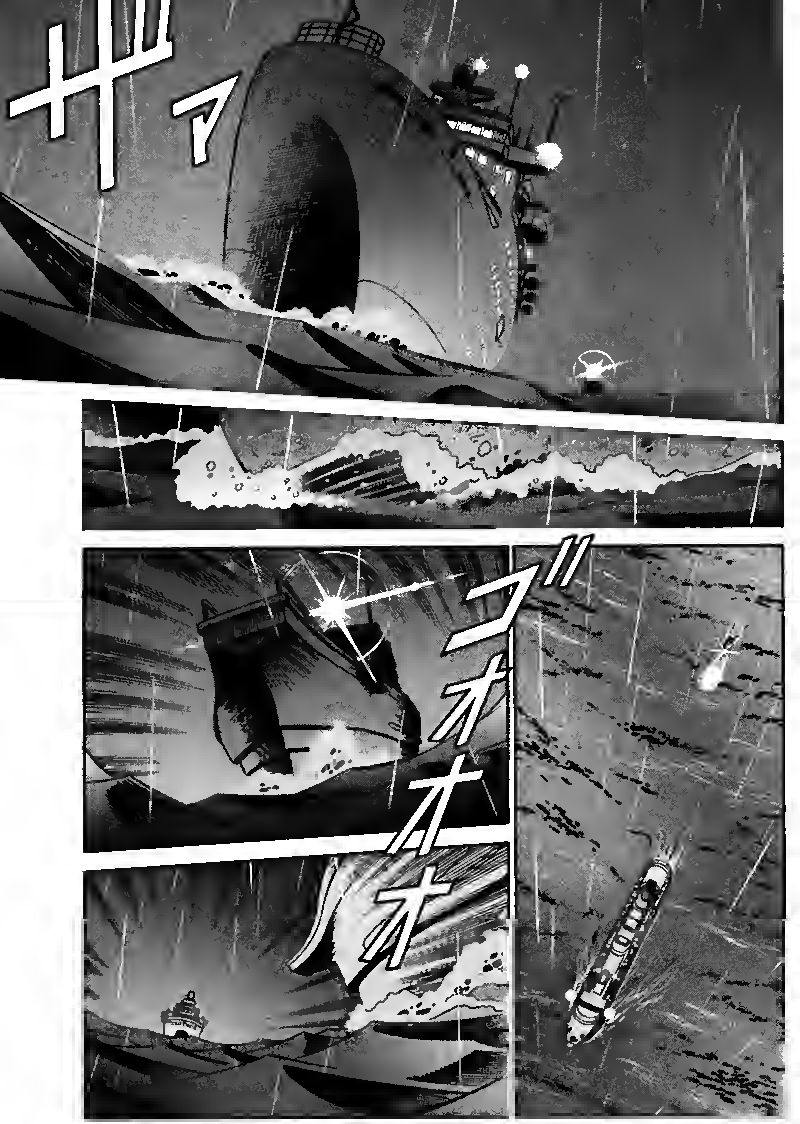
ISN'T IT BETTER TO BE CAREFUL?
WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN!
.....
PRESIDENT, OVER HERE!
HEH!
WAS IT A GOOD IDEA TO INVITE ALL THESE PEOPLE ON BOARD?
WHAT IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO THE PAINTING?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!
AFTER ALL, WE ARE AT SEA - 5 KILOMETERS AWAY FROM THE DOCK!
EVEN IF THEY STEAL THE PAINTING, WHERE WILL THEY ESCAPE?

UM... YES...
AND THE SECURITY IS FLAWLESS?
I'LL SEE THROUGH EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM!
NO MATTER WHAT TOUMA'S TRICKS ARE. .
MY METHODS WERE TOO CLUMSY TO GET THE PAINTING BACK.
EVERYONE, I AM TRULY SORRY.

AMBASSADOR, YOU DID AS MUCH AS YOU COULD.
DON'T BE SORRY!
I AM ASHAMED
HUH?
YOU EVEN EXPRESSED YOUR OPPOSITION TO THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT.
THEN, TOUMA-KUN...
THIS OLD MAN IS PART OF THE REMBRANDT ASSOCIATION?

!?
WHAT'S THAT LIGHT?
IT'S GETTING CLOSER TO US!
PRESIDENT BLADE, IT'S BAD!
A SMALL BOAT IS HEADING TOWARDS US!

I SEE . HE RAN OUT OF IDEAS, SO HE IS PLANNING TO TAKE IT BY FORCE AND THEN ESCAPE WITH THE PAINTING?
IS THAT PART OF TOUMA'S PLAN?
SHAKE OFF THAT BOAT!
ドドドド
FULL SPEED AHEAD!
IT SEEMS A SUSPICIOUS BOAT IS HEADING TOWARDS US.
THE SHIP IS MOVING!
AND PUT EXTRA SECURITY AROUND THE PAINTING - DON'T LET ANYONE GET CLOSE!
COULD THAT BE TOUMA-KUN'S PLAN?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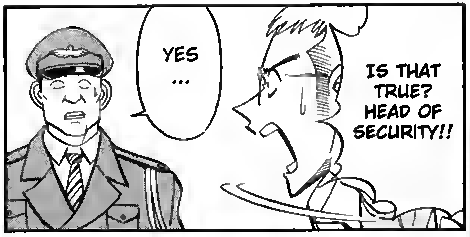
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO CATCH UP WITH US!
HA HA HA HA! HOW ABOUT THAT?
THEY REALLY CAN'T CATCH UP...
IT'S OVER...
HA HA HA! ARE YOU GIVING UP AND HEADING HOME?
ゴオオオ

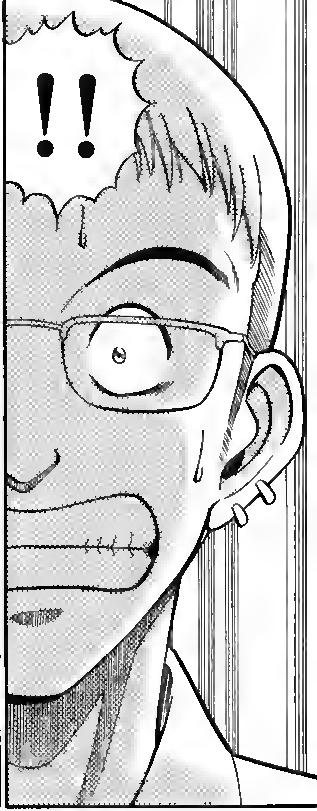
ISN'T IT A PITY? ALTHOUGH I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WERE THINKING, I DID FOLLOW YOUR ADVICE AND TAKE PRECAUTIONS.
IF I HAD REALLY WANTED THAT BOAT TO GET CLOSE TO US...
YOUR BOAT CANNOT CATCH US ANYMORE!
ALAN, YOU HAD BETTER DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT PAINTING!
WOULDN'T I HAVE MADE SURE THAT THE LIGHTS WERE SWITCHED OFF?

OTHERWISE, IT WILL BE CONFISCATED BY THE DUTCH!
ERR... WHAT'S GOING ON?
BY US?
HUH?
THUS, IF THIS PAINTING ENTERS DUTCH TERRITORY, IT WILL BE CONFISCATED.
THIS PAINTING IS STOLEN PROPERTY ...
EVEN THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT HAVE PERMITTED A PUBLIC EXHIBITION.
DON'T YOU GET IT? THIS SHIP IS HEADING TOWARDS THE OPEN SEA...

IF IT TRAVELS MORE THAN 12 NAUTICAL MILES AWAY FROM THE COAST LINE, IT ENTERS INTERNATIONAL WATERS...
OCCUPANTS WILL THEN AUTOMATICALLY COME UNDER THE SAME JURISDICTION AS THE SHIP'S.

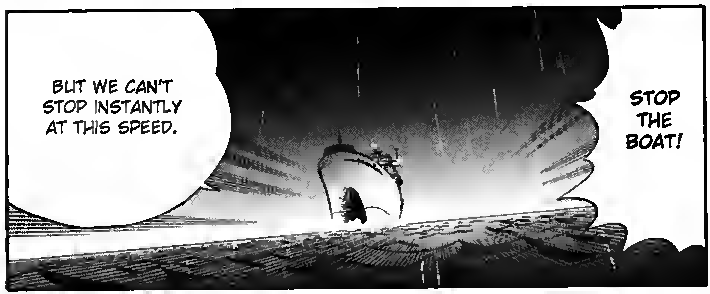
IN OTHER WORDS, THE JURISDICTION OF THIS SHIP IS THE NETHERLANDS!
KLOMPEN IS THE DUTCH NAME FOR "WOODEN CLOGS"...
KLOMPEN


YES ...
IS THAT TRUE? HEAD OF SECURITY!!


!!

THAT WAS ONE OF THE SMALL DETAILS I WAS TRYING TO WARN YOU ABOUT.
WE CANNOT EXERCISE OUR AUTHORITY IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS.

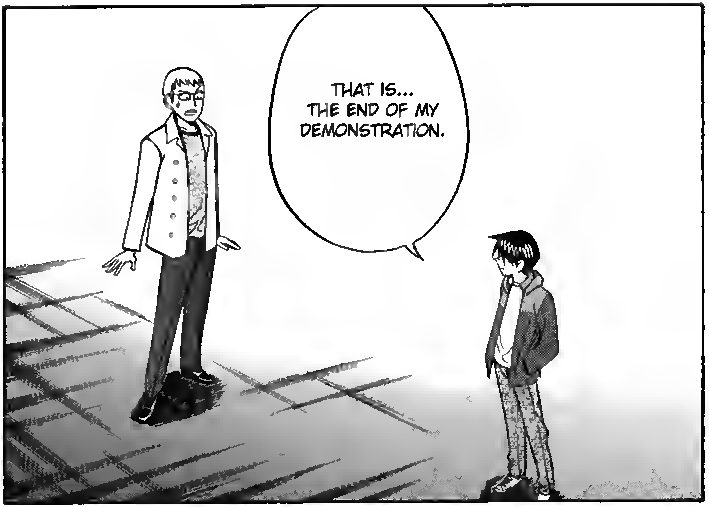
YOU BLOCKHEAD! WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT EARLIER?


BUT WE CAN'T STOP INSTANTLY AT THIS SPEED.
STOP THE BOAT!

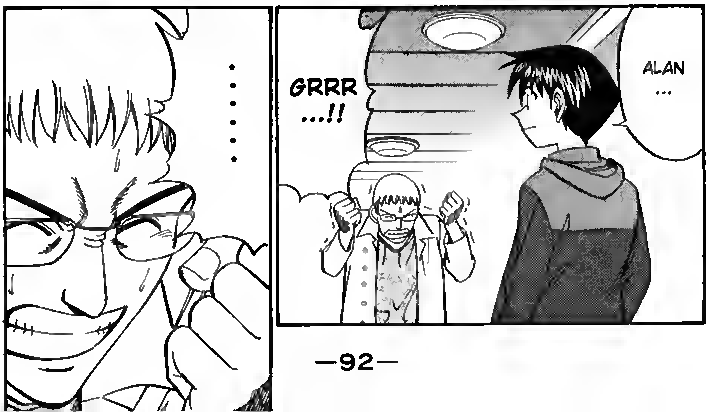
THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT! IS THIS REALLY A DUTCH VESSEL?
THE FLAG FLOWN BY THIS SHIP...
IS NOT THE DUTCH FLAG!
IT'S A FLAG OF CONVENIENCE!
FLAG OF CONVENIENCE?
A SHIP OWNER CAN REDUCE THEIR TAXES BY REGISTERING IN A COUNTRY THAT DOESN'T HAVE TAXES.
SOME EXAMPLES OF FLAG OF CONVENIENCE COUNTRIES ARE PANAMA, CYPRUS, OR LIBERIA. .YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT THAT ON TV, RIGHT?

THIS FLAG BELONGS TO PANAMA!
BUT THE SHIP ITSELF IS DUTCH!
SO THIS VESSEL COMES UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF PANAMA, NOT THE NETHERLANDS!
UNFORTUNATELY, THAT IS NOT THE CASE.
A SHIP'S REGISTERED STATE CAN BE CHANGED BY THE OWNER.
SO IF AN OIL TANKER SPILLS OIL, THE OWNER'S COUNTRY WILL PUSH THE RESPONSIBILITY ONTO THE FLAG OF CONVENIENCE STATE!
CONVERSELY, WHEN IT BENEFITS THE SHIP'S OWNER, ITS REGISTERED STATE CAN BE CHANGED TO THAT OF THE SHIP'S OWNER.

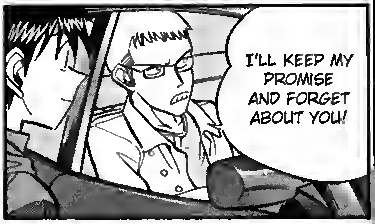
THEREFORE, IF THE OWNER OF THIS SHIP CHANGES THE SHIP'S COUNTRY OF REGISTRATION TO THE NETHERLANDS, THE PAINTING WILL BE CONFISCATED.
OH! THERE'S A TIME DIFFERENCE!
ARGH!
SO IT'S NOT THE DAY OF OUR CONTEST, APRIL 1ST.
SINCE THIS SHIP IS UNDER DUTCH JURISDICTION, IT'S STILL MARCH 31ST LIKE IN EUROPE AND THE NETHERLANDS
AS IT FOLLOWS THE LOCAL TIME, WHICH MEANS THAT TODAY IS APRIL 1ST!
TIME ON BOARD DOES NOT FOLLOW THAT OF ITS REGISTERED STATE...
YOU'RE WRONG AGAIN.

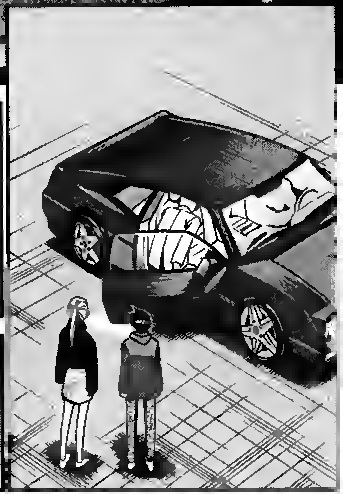

THAT IS... THE END OF MY DEMONSTRATION.

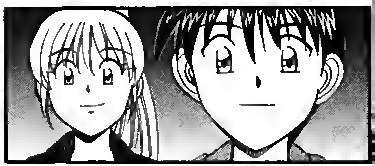
PRESIDENT! WE'RE ABOUT TO REACH INTERNATIONAL WATERS!


ALAN ...
GRRR ...!!
. . . . . .

FINE! I ADMIT DEFEAT! I'M DONATING THE PAINTING TO THE NETHERLANDS!
DONATE?
WHAT?
ARE YOU GOING TO COMPLAIN?!
I'D RATHER DONATE IT THAN HAVE IT CONFISCATED!


I'LL KEEP MY PROMISE AND FORGET ABOUT YOU!

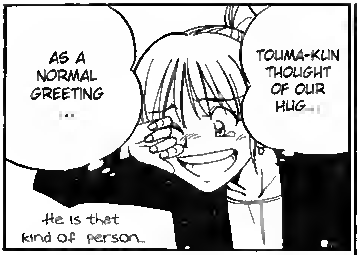




BUT I MIGHT REMEMBER YOU AGAIN...
THAT'S JUST THE WAY I DO THINGS!

ブオオ
LET'S GO, ELLIE!
WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?
.....
REALLY? IS THAT TRUE?
HA HA HA! YES!!
WE WILL DONATE THE MONEY WE WERE PLANNING TO USE FOR THE PAINTING TO YOUR ORGANIZATION.

JAPANESE PEOPLE ARE PROBABLY NOT ACCUSTOMED TO THIS KIND OF GREETING
OH, SORRY!
WE HAVE DONATION MONEY!
MISS, THIS IS AMAZING!
IT'S SOMETHING WE DO EVERY DAY!
WE CALL THIS A 'HUG' IN OUR COUNTRY ...
WHAT!!
IS A COMMON FORM OF GREETING?
A HUG ...


AS A NORMAL GREETING...
TOUMA-KUN THOUGHT OF OUR HUG...
He is that kind of person...

OH, SO THAT'S WHAT IT WAS!
?
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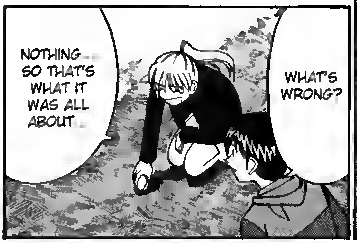
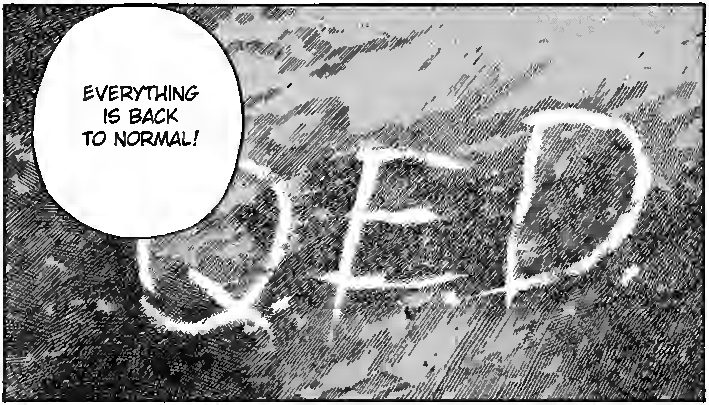

NOTHING... SO THAT'S WHAT IT WAS ALL ABOUT...
WHAT'S WRONG?

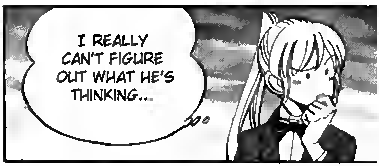
SCRATCH


EVERYTHING IS BACK TO NORMAL!
Q.E.D.

quod erat demonstrandum

Calamity Man

Translator: Flick
Cleaners: kokky, Gobi, argentscarf
Typesetter: argentscarf
QC: Sammich Diety



WILL SHE EVER FIGURE HIM OUT? WILL THERE EVER BE LASTING DEVELOPMENT IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP INTO ROMANTIC TERRITORY?

Q.E.D.

¥:／>q. e. d._

Q.E.D.

Q.E.D

Q.E.D.

Q.E.D.

Q.E.D.

Q.E.D

Q.E.D.

Q. E. D.

Q. E. D.

Q.E.D.

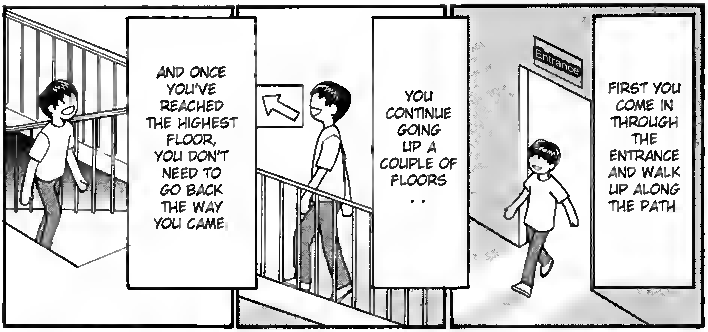
ORIONWAVE

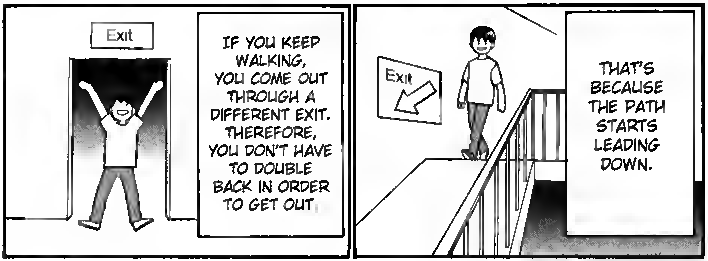
IS HERE OKAY?
WILL IT FIT?
A BIT LOWER ...
ALRIGHT, I'VE GOT ALL OF IT!

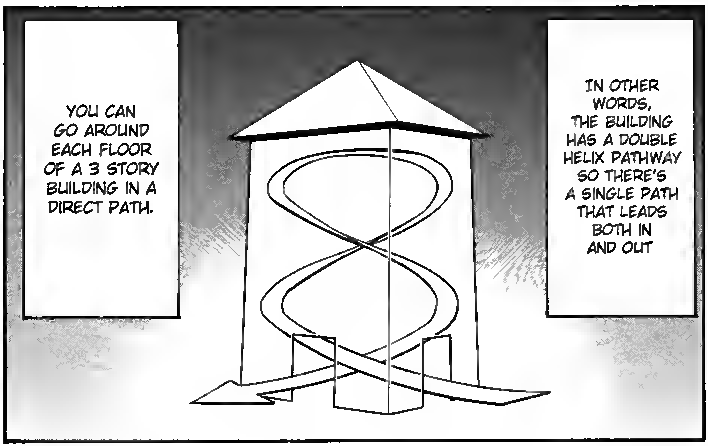
KA-CHIK!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, MIZUHARA -SAN?
IT LOOKED DULL, SO I THOUGHT I'D LIVEN IT UP A BIT.
WE DIDN'T COME TO THIS VILLAGE TO PLAY AROUND, YOU KNOW!!
12
KLEIN TOWER

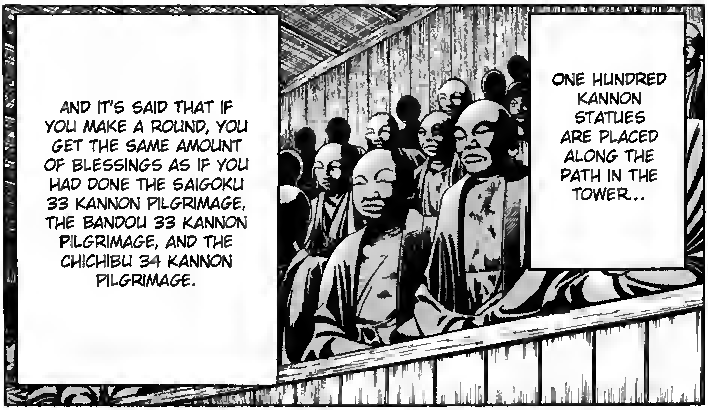
THIS STORY BEGAN A FEW DAYS AGO.
WHY DID WE COME HERE?
THAT'S RIGHT, WE DIDN'T COME HERE TO PLAY.
WE CAN'T GO BACK UNTIL I TAKE A PROPER PICTURE OF THAT TOWER FOR DATA!
OK, I GET IT!
THE TOWER OF HELL?
ARCHITECTURAL DEPARTMENT
RATSUDA'S OFFICE
足茂布大学

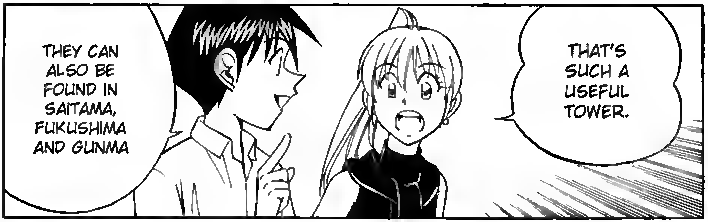
WELL, THAT'S WHAT THE LOCALS CALL IT...
BUT IT'S A TYPE OF "SAZAE TOWER".
"SAZAE TOWER?"
WELL, IT'S A STRUCTURE LIKE ONE OF THOSE SEVERAL STORY HIGH TEMPLES DEDICATED TO KANNON THAT ARE DISTRIBUTED FROM KANTO TO TOUHAKU...
BUT WITH A DIFFERENT CONSTRUCTION.

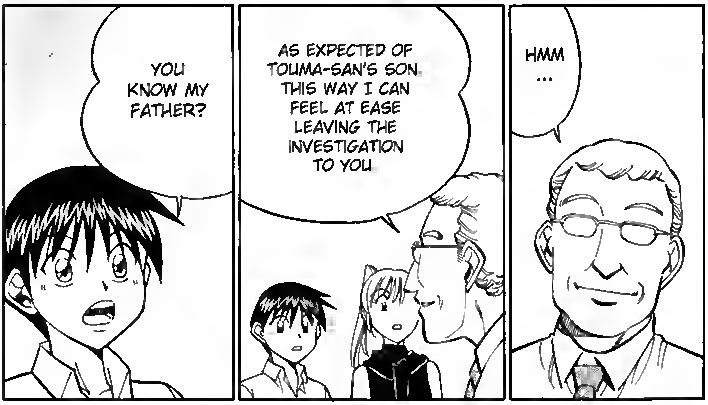

FIRST YOU COME IN THROUGH THE ENTRANCE AND WALK UP ALONG THE PATH
Entrance
YOU CONTINUE GOING UP A COUPLE OF FLOORS . .
AND ONCE YOU'VE REACHED THE HIGHEST FLOOR, YOU DON'T NEED TO GO BACK THE WAY YOU CAME.


THAT'S BECAUSE THE PATH STARTS LEADING DOWN.
Exit
IF YOU KEEP WALKING, YOU COME OUT THROUGH A DIFFERENT EXIT. THEREFORE, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DOUBLE BACK IN ORDER TO GET OUT.
Exit


IN OTHER WORDS, THE BUILDING HAS A DOUBLE HELIX PATHWAY SO THERE'S A SINGLE PATH THAT LEADS BOTH IN AND OUT
YOU CAN GO AROUND EACH FLOOR OF A 3 STORY BUILDING IN A DIRECT PATH.

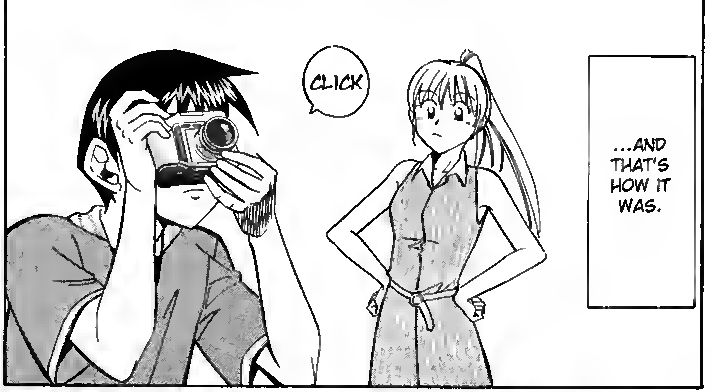

AND IT'S SAID THAT IF YOU MAKE A ROUND, YOU GET THE SAME AMOUNT OF BLESSINGS AS IF YOU HAD DONE THE SAIGOKU 33 KANNON PILGRIMAGE, THE BANDOU 33 KANNON PILGRIMAGE, AND THE CHICHIBU 34 KANNON PILGRIMAGE.
ONE HUNDRED KANNON STATUES ARE PLACED ALONG THE PATH IN THE TOWER..

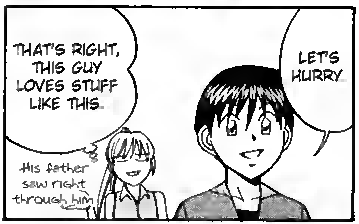

THEY CAN ALSO BE FOUND IN SAITAMA, FUKUSHIMA AND GUNMA
THAT'S SUCH A USEFUL TOWER.

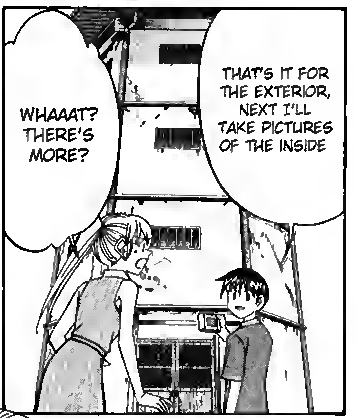

YOU KNOW MY FATHER?
AS EXPECTED OF TOUMA-SAN'S SON. THIS WAY I CAN FEEL AT EASE LEAVING THE INVESTIGATION TO YOU.
HMM ...

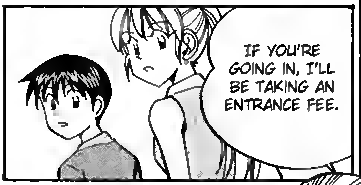
THE THING IS, OUR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT WAS ASKED TO EXAMINE THIS BUILDING CALLED THE "TOWER OF HELL", BUT IT'S A BUSY TIME FOR US RIGHT NOW..
SO I GAVE YOUR FATHER A CALL COMPLAINING ABOUT IT, AND HE REFERRED ME TO YOU, HIS SON.
WE ARE ACQUAINT-ANCES...
OR RATHER, HE WAS MY SENIOR IN UNIVERSITY.
HE SAID YOU'D DEFINITELY BE INTERESTED IN THIS.
HOW ABOUT IT? WILL YOU DO IT?
ALTHOUGH I SAID INVESTIGATION, ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS TAKE DETAILED PICTURES..
ALSO, GATHER AS MUCH MATERIAL ABOUT ITS HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AS POSSIBLE. IT'S NOTHING DIFFICULT.

CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
WHY IS THE BUILDING CALLED THE TOWER OF HELL?
BECAUSE IT IS BELIEVED TO BE THE ENTRANCE TO THE UNDERWORLD.
THAT BIT OF MYSTERY MAKES IT INTERESTING, RIGHT?



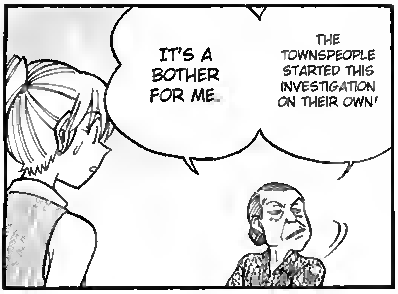


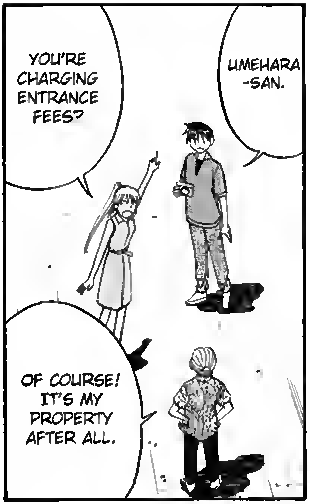


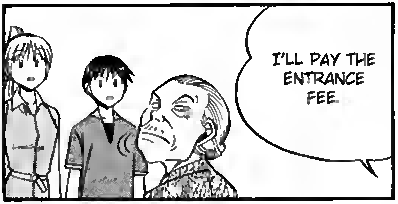


THE TOWER'S OWNER

UMEHARA RIN

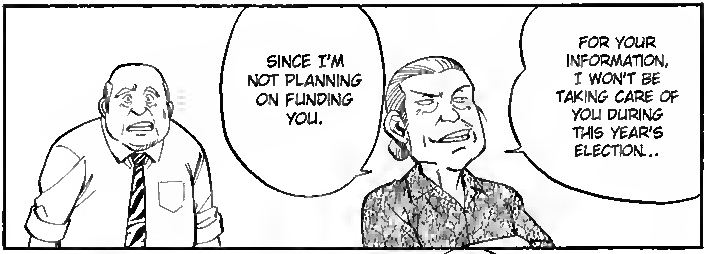

IT'S A BOTHER FOR ME.
THE TOWNSPEOPLE STARTED THIS INVESTIGATION ON THEIR OWN!

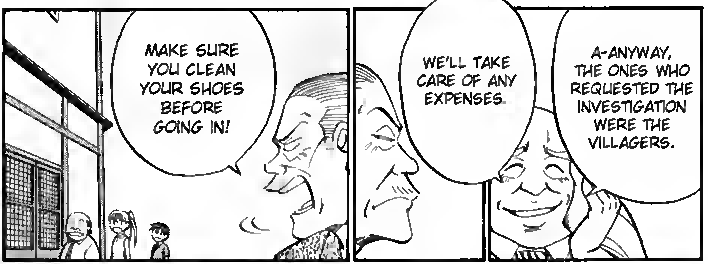

UMEHARA-SAN.
YOU'RE CHARGING ENTRANCE FEES?
OF COURSE! IT'S MY PROPERTY AFTER ALL.


I'LL PAY THE ENTRANCE FEE.

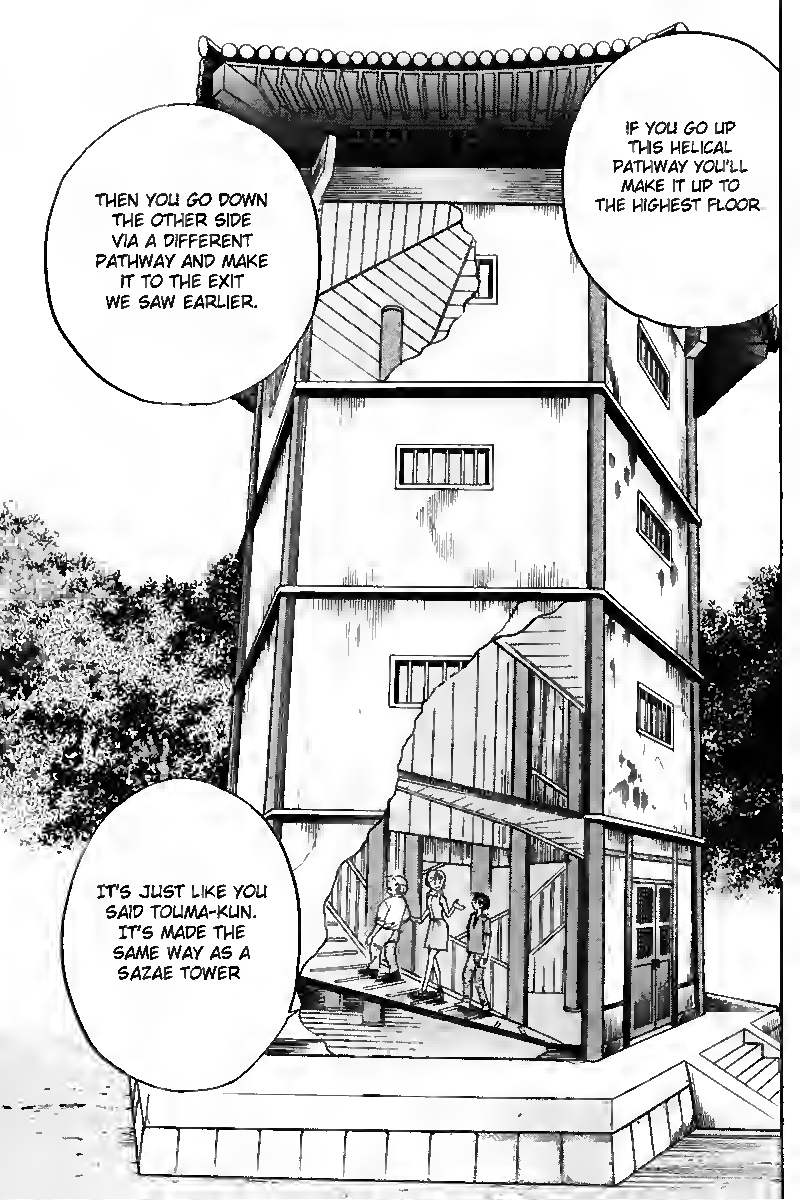
WHAT DO YOU WANT, HEADMAN IJIMA?
UMEHARA-SAN, THANK YOU FOR ALWAYS TAKING CARE OF ME.

VILLAGE HEADMAN
IIJIMA YOSHIHIRO

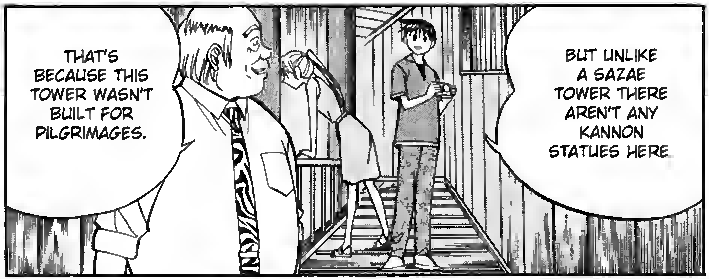

SINCE I'M NOT PLANNING ON FUNDING YOU.
FOR YOUR INFORMATION, I WON'T BE TAKING CARE OF YOU DURING THIS YEAR'S ELECTION..


MAKE SURE YOU CLEAN YOUR SHOES BEFORE GOING IN!
WE'LL TAKE CARE OF ANY EXPENSES.
A-ANYWAY, THE ONES WHO REQUESTED THE INVESTIGATION WERE THE VILLAGERS.

THIS IS THE ENTRANCE RAMP.
OVER THERE IS THE EXIT RAMP.


IF YOU GO UP THIS HELICAL PATHWAY YOU'LL MAKE IT UP TO THE HIGHEST FLOOR
THEN YOU GO DOWN THE OTHER SIDE VIA A DIFFERENT PATHWAY AND MAKE IT TO THE EXIT WE SAW EARLIER.
IT'S JUST LIKE YOU SAID TOUMA-KUN. IT'S MADE THE SAME WAY AS A SAZAE TOWER

THE WHOLE TOWER IS A HEXAGONAL PRISM AND CONSISTS OF 4 FLOORS.
AND INSIDE, AS YOU CAN SEE, IS A HELICAL CORRIDOR LEADING TO THE HIGHEST FLOOR.



*WESTERN PARADISE

UMEHARA -SAN'S FATHER, UMEHARA TAIZOU-SAN ...
WAS THE ONE WHO BUILT THIS TOWER.
THE UMEHARAS WERE A WEALTHY FAMILY WHO OWNED A LOT OF LAND.
TAIZOU-SAN WAS THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY AT THAT TIME.
HE WAS CONSTANTLY PARTYING AND INDULGING IN SENSUAL PLEASURES ...
DRINKING GAMBLING AND BUYING WOMEN ON A DAILY BASIS OVER AND OVER AGAIN.
AND ONCE HE GOT TIRED OF THAT, HE WENT ON A JOURNEY...
WELL, HE WAS A WEIRD PERSON.
AND THEN, HIS LIFESTYLE TOOK A TOLL ON HIS LIVER AND HE KNEW HIS DAYS WERE NUMBERED.

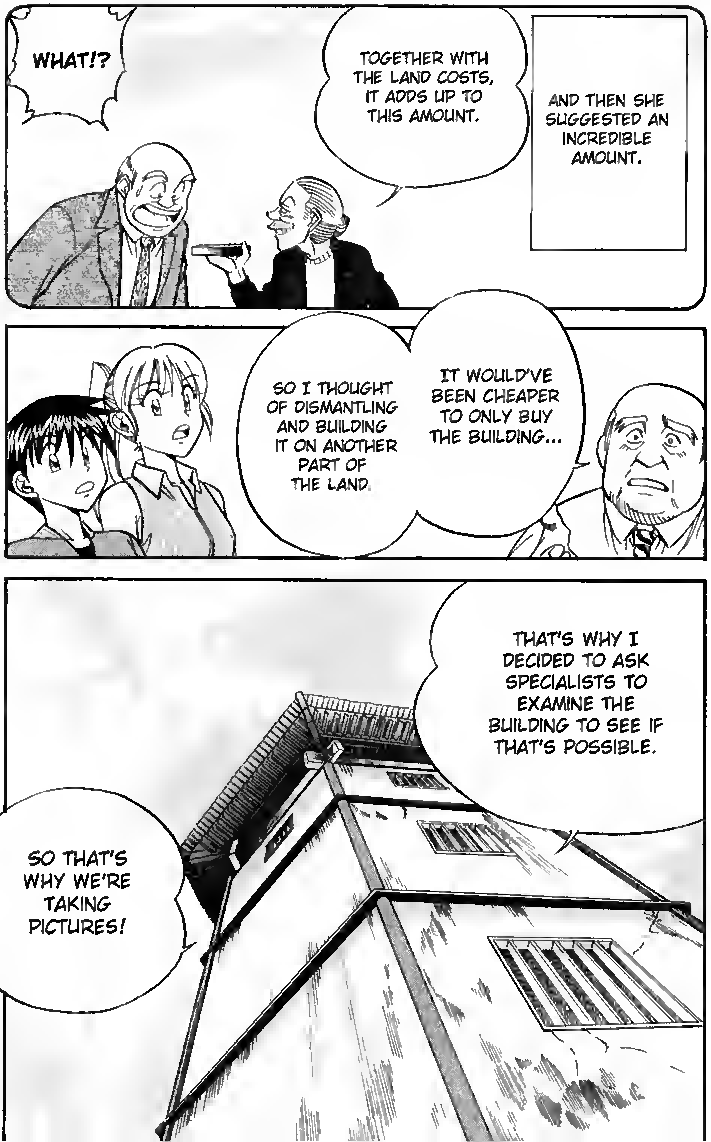
BUT THE HEAD MONK, THINKING BADLY OF TAIZOU-SAN'S WAY OF LIFE, GAVE HIM A HARSH SERMON.
TURNING TO BUDDHA AND THE GODS, TAIZOU-SAN WENT TO MEET WITH THE HEAD MONK.
SHUT UP, YOU FUCKING MONK! BE QUIET AND LISTEN TO ME! DON'T BE SO FULL OF YOURSELF!!
A GOOD FOR NOTHING SUCH AS YOURSELF SHOULD GO TO HELL!
AFTER DECLARING THAT, HE STARTED BUILDING THIS TOWER.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT MYSELF, JUST YOU WATCH!!
I'M NOT BORROWING A MONK'S POWERS TO GET TO SUKHAVATI!!
I ASKED HIM
UNCLE, CAN YOU REALLY GO TO SUKHAVATI WITH THIS TOWER?

TAIZOU-SAN WAS FULL OF CONFIDENCE
OF COURSE.
RIN, YOU SHOULD ALSO PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THIS TOWER'S MYSTERIOUS POWER
.....
AND THEN, THE TOWER WAS FINISHED...
BUT THEN ONE DAY...
HE DISAPPEARED INSIDE OF IT.
TAIZOU-SAN WENT UP THE TOWER COUNTLESS TIMES
THE VILLAGERS DESPERATELY SEARCHED, BUT COULDN'T FIND HIM.
WE THOUGHT THAT MAYBE HE WENT ON ANOTHER JOURNEY...

HE WAS SUDDENLY FOUND ON THE TOP FLOOR OF THE TOWER ...
BUT THEN ONE YEAR LATER..
AS A SKELETON!
TAIZOU-SAN REALLY WENT TO SUKHAVATI!
EVERYONE WAS SURPRISED ...
IT WAS OVER THERE.
I WITNESSED THE TOWER'S MYSTERIOUS POWER WITH MY OWN EYES.

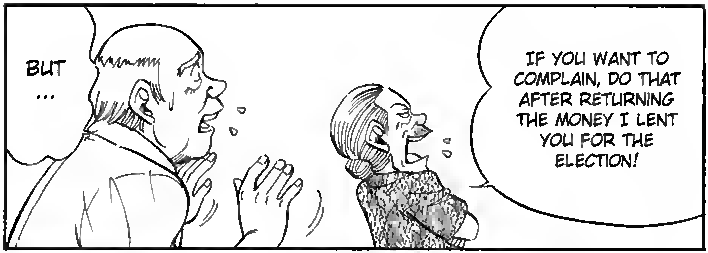
THIS IS WHERE TAIZOU-SAN'S REMAINS WERE DISCOVERED.
IT'S A RATHER MYSTERIOUS TOWER, ISN'T IT? I THINK IT WOULD BE POPULAR EVEN WITH THE CITY KIDS.
THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT'S WHY I THOUGHT OF MAKING THIS TOWER INTO THE CENTERPIECE OF THE VILLAGE'S RENEWAL PROJECT.

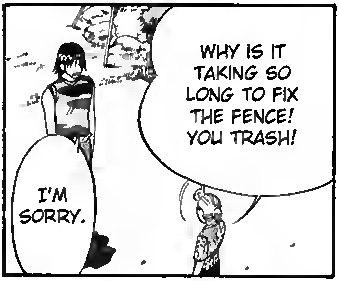
THIS VILLAGE DOESN'T HAVE ANY INTERESTING SIGHTS YOU SEE...
VILLAGE RENEWAL PROJECT?
AND ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE KEEP LEAVING, IT'S BECOMING MORE AND MORE LONELY.
I'VE BEEN THE VILLAGE HEADMAN FOR 20 YEARS NOW...
SHE SAID SHE'D ONLY BE MOTIVATED IF WE GATHER A LOT OF MONEY.
WHEN I TALKED TO GRANNY UMEHARA ABOUT THE PROJECT...
THEN WHY THE INVESTIGATION? IS IT BECAUSE YOU WANT TO MAKE A GUIDE MAP?
NO ...
THAT'S WHY I THOUGHT OF MARKETING THIS MYSTERIOUS TOWER AND GATHERING SOME PEOPLE THAT WAY.

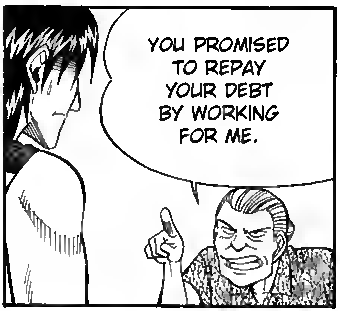

WHAT!?
TOGETHER WITH THE LAND COSTS, IT ADDS UP TO THIS AMOUNT.
AND THEN SHE SUGGESTED AN INCREDIBLE AMOUNT.
SO I THOUGHT OF DISMANTLING AND BUILDING IT ON ANOTHER PART OF THE LAND.
IT WOULD'VE BEEN CHEAPER TO ONLY BUY THE BUILDING...
THAT'S WHY I DECIDED TO ASK SPECIALISTS TO EXAMINE THE BUILDING TO SEE IF THAT'S POSSIBLE.
SO THAT'S WHY WE'RE TAKING PICTURES!

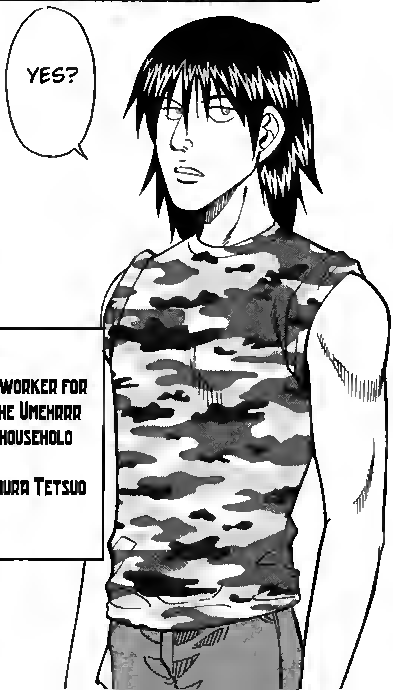
KIYOE -SAN.
UMEHARA RIN'S DAUGHTER
UMEHARA KIYOE
OH, IT'S THE VILLAGE HEADMAN
GOOD DAY.
THESE KIDS SAID THEY WANTED TO SEE THE DOCUMENTS CONNECTED TO THE TOWER.
I THINK THOSE WERE LEFT IN THE SHED IN THE BACK.
AH, I SEE.

THINK ABOUT YOUR POSITION FOR A MOMENT!
THAT'S GOING OVERBOARD...
RIGHT, MOTHER?
YOU NONCHALANTLY CAME BACK AFTER YOUR HUSBAND DIED...
NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU TRY TO SUCK UP TO ME, THERE'S NOTHING LEFT FOR YOU TO GET!
OOH... ARE YOU TRYING TO FORCE YOUR OPINION ON ME?
KIYOE-SAN HAS BEEN WORKING HARD TAKING CARE OF YOU!
THAT'S SAYING TOO MUCH, UMEHARA -SAN









A worker for the Umehara household

Emura Tetsuo

THE WATER IS OVERFLOWING BECAUSE OF THE RAIN BEFORE, IT'S HORRIBLE!
AFTER YOU'RE DONE WITH THIS, CLEAN THE RAIN GUTTER!
THE SHED DOOR ISN'T LOCKED..
SO JUST GO IN AND HELP YOURSELF.
AH, SURE.
KIYOE-SAN, COULD WE GO IN WHILE SHE'S ARGUING?
IF YOU LEAVE BEHIND THAT MUCH LAND, THEN THE INHERITANCE TAX IS ENORMOUS.
THERE WON'T BE MANY ASSETS LEFT AFTERWARDS, KIYOE-SAN ALREADY KNOWS THAT.
AH, THAT WAS THE TRUTH.
SHE'S THE OWNER YET SHE SAID THERE'S NOTHING LEFT...
SHE SEEMS LIKE A DIFFICULT OLD LADY.

I SEE, THEN THEY'LL GET MARRIED?
YOU SEE, KIYOE-SAN IS DATING THAT EMURA-KUN FELLOW.
?
THERE ARE A LOT OF PROBLEMS AROUND THAT.
BECAUSE OF HIS HEAVY DRINKING AND VIOLENCE.
EMURA -KUN GOT DIVORCED ...
KIYOE-SAN LOST HER HUSBAND, CAME BACK HOME AND IS TAKING CARE OF GRANNY UMEHARA.
IN OTHER WORDS, SHE CAN'T GO AGAINST HER.
HE'S USUALLY A NICE, KIND PERSON, BUT ALCOHOL CHANGES PEOPLE.

AND NOW HE'S DOING MANUAL LABOR FOR HER IN ORDER TO PAY IT BACK
HE BORROWED THE MONEY FOR HIS DIVORCE FROM GRANNY UMEHARA..
BUT THERE'S NO WAY SHE'D LET HER DAUGHTER MARRY SOMEONE LIKE HIM
HE'S WORKING FOR HER WITHOUT PAY, SO HE'S HOLDING BACK FROM DRINKING.
IN OTHER WORDS...
THERE IS A GREAT WALL CALLED GRANNY UMEHARA STANDING BETWEEN THEM.

Village Community Hall
I'M SORRY TO HAVE KEPT YOU WAITING.
SHALL WE BEGIN?
DO YOU THINK WE'LL BE ABLE TO BUY THE TOWER FROM THAT OLD LADY?
YOU'RE AIMING FOR YOUR 5TH RE-ELECTION...
WILL THIS VILLAGE RENEWAL PROJECT EVEN WORK OUT?
IF THIS PLAN GOES SOUTH, YOU MIGHT NOT GET ANY VOTES NEXT TIME.

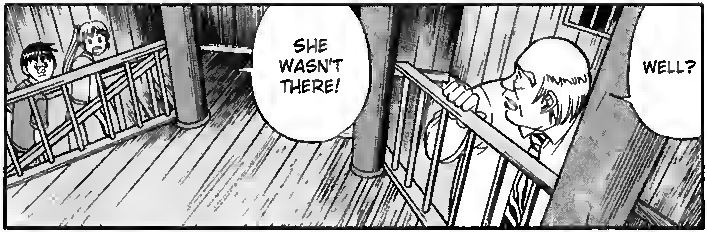
IF YOU WANT TO BE RE-ELECTED, CONVINCE THE OLD LADY!
NOW, NOW! THAT'S COLD.
Ha ha ha, You said it!
IF THE OLD LADY WERE TO DIE SOONER THAN LATER, THEN THE HEADMAN WILL HAVE IT EASY TOO!
JUST TELL HER OFF!
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY GUTS.
THE OLD LADY'S PROBABLY ON YOUR CASE ALL THE TIME.
HEY, EMURA, ARE YOU DOING WELL WITH KIYOE?
ARE YOU EVEN A MAN?
ARE YOU AFRAID OF AN OLD PERSON!?

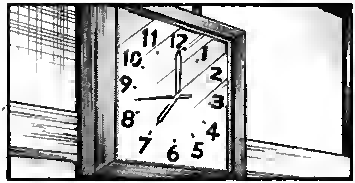
I THOUGHT YOU STOPPED DRINKING ...
!
AH, HEY! EMURA!
IF IT WERE ME, THAT OLD..
WHERE?
TO GRANNY UMEHARA.
HEADMAN, LET'S GO.

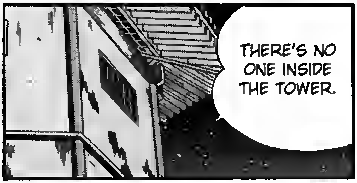
LET'S GO CONVINCE HER TOGETHER!
AND, DID YOU GATHER ALL THE MATERIAL?
YEAH, SOMEHOW.
HAVE YOU SEEN MY MOTHER?
HEY! EXCUSE ME!
AH

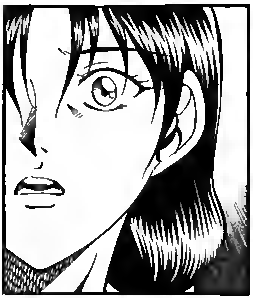
THIS IS WEIRD, SHE'S ALWAYS HOME IN TIME FOR DINNER.
NO, WE WERE IN THE SHED THE WHOLE TIME
KIYOE -SAN.
SHOULD WE HELP LOOK FOR HER?
YES, ALTHOUGH I JUST BEGAN LOOKING NOW...
YOU CAN'T FIND HER ANYWHERE?
HEADMAN, AND ALSO EMURA-SAN.
THE LAST TIME I SAW HER WAS AT FIVE, AND THEN I WENT TO PREPARE DINNER..
GRANNY UMEHARA IS MISSING? SINCE WHEN?

THANK YOU.
THEN LET'S SEARCH FOR HER TOGETHER.
I'LL GO TO THE FOREST IN THE BACK.
I'LL GO TO THE VILLAGE.
WE'LL GO CHECK THE TOWER!
I'LL GO UP THROUGH THE EXIT, YOU GO UP THROUGH THE ENTRANCE!
OK.
UMEHARA-SAAAN!
MOTHER!!


SHE WASN'T THERE!
WELL?



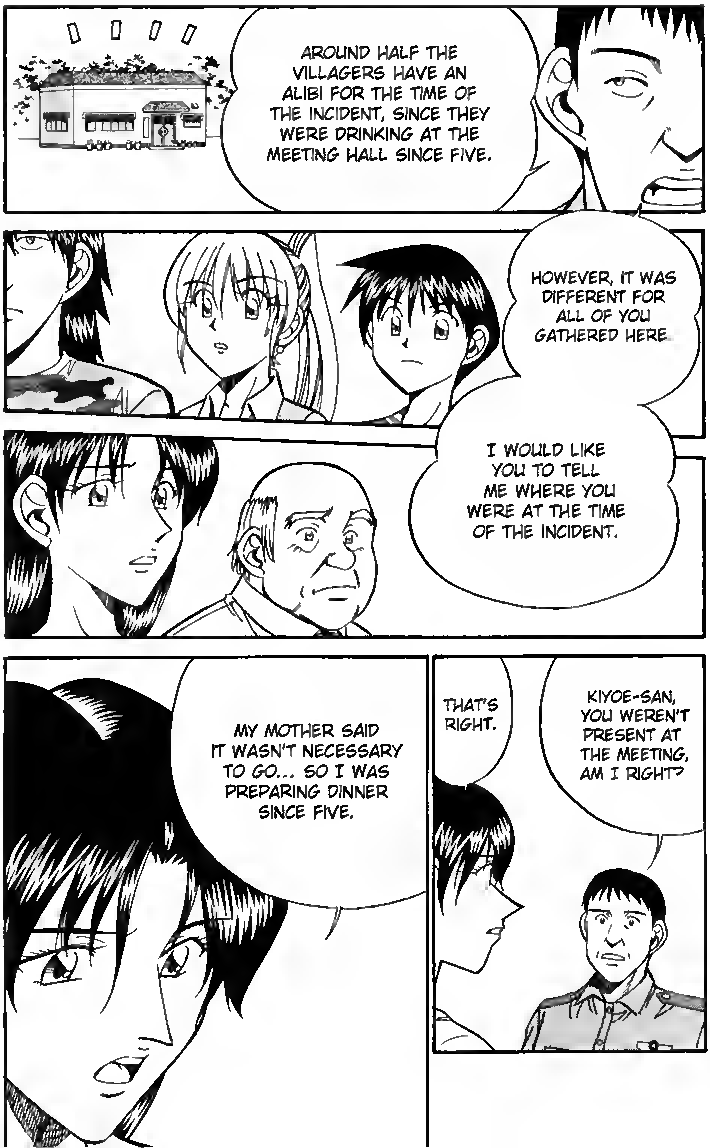

THERE'S NO ONE INSIDE THE TOWER.



MOTHER
...

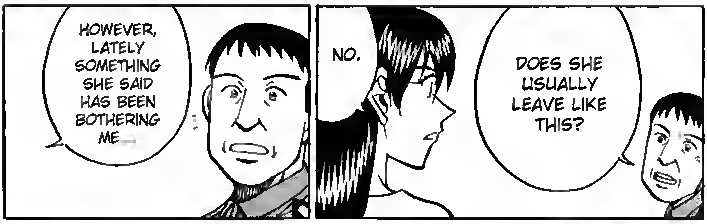
AAAAAHHH!!

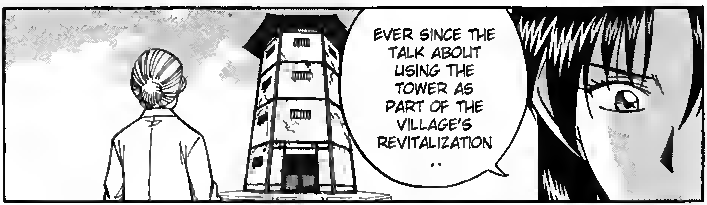
SUICIDE ...
IS WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE...
BUT FOR NOW...
I HAVE A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU
AFTER ALL, AS YOU KNOW...
SHE HAD MANY ENEMIES.

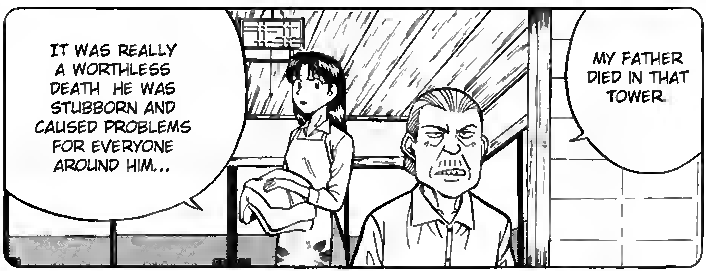

AROUND HALF THE VILLAGERS HAVE AN ALIBI FOR THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT, SINCE THEY WERE DRINKING AT THE MEETING HALL SINCE FIVE.
HOWEVER, IT WAS DIFFERENT FOR ALL OF YOU GATHERED HERE.
I WOULD LIKE YOU TO TELL ME WHERE YOU WERE AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT.
MY MOTHER SAID IT WASN'T NECESSARY TO GO... SO I WAS PREPARING DINNER SINCE FIVE.
THAT'S RIGHT.
KIYOE-SAN, YOU WEREN'T PRESENT AT THE MEETING, AM I RIGHT?

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SAW UMEHARA -SAN?
A BIT BEFORE FIVE.
I WAS IN THE KITCHEN AFTER THAT.
AT SIX, WHEN IT WAS TIME FOR DINNER MY MOTHER STILL HADN'T COME BACK...
SO I WENT OUT TO LOOK FOR HER.
HAVE YOU SEEN MY MOTHER?
AH
WHAT'S THE MATTER, KIYOE -SAN?
HEADMAN, AND ALSO EMURA -SAN.
AFTERWARDS EVERYONE WENT TO LOOK FOR HER.

AND THEN I WENT TO SEARCH IN THE NEARBY FOREST
MOTHER!!
I LOOKED AROUND THE HOUSE...


HOWEVER, LATELY SOMETHING SHE SAID HAS BEEN BOTHERING ME...
NO.
DOES SHE USUALLY LEAVE LIKE THIS?


EVER SINCE THE TALK ABOUT USING THE TOWER AS PART OF THE VILLAGE'S REVITALIZATION ..

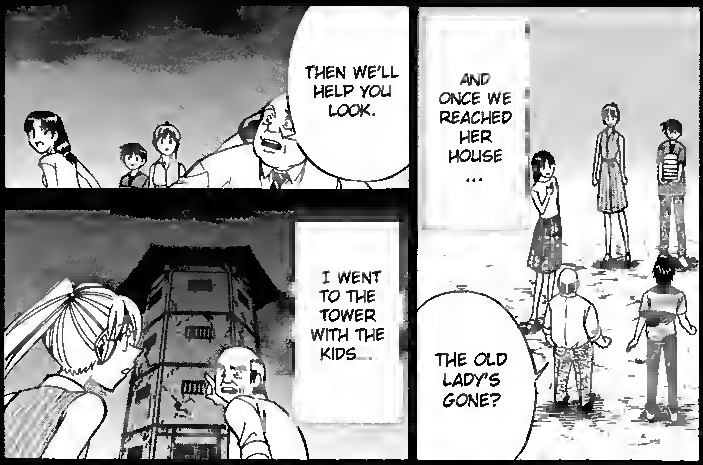

IT WAS REALLY A WORTHLESS DEATH HE WAS STUBBORN AND CAUSED PROBLEMS FOR EVERYONE AROUND HIM...
MY FATHER DIED IN THAT TOWER.

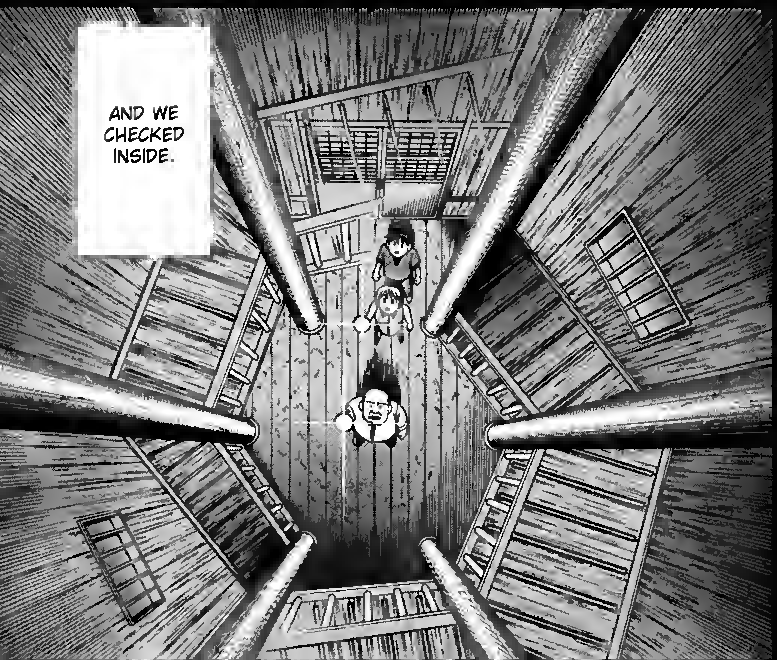
I PLAN ON GOING WITHOUT CAUSING ANY PROBLEMS FOR ANYONE ..
THAT WAY I'LL BE ABLE TO GO TO SUKHAVATI.
THAT'S RIGHT, IT'S NOT SOMETHING THE OLD LADY WOULD SAY.
FOR MY MOTHER TO SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
IS THERE ANY POSSIBILITY UMEHARA-SAN COMMITTED SUICIDE?
IF SO, I'D LIKE YOU TO TELL ME.
AH... SORRY.
HEY!

I FELT A TIGHTNESS IN MY CHEST...
WHEN I LOOKED AT THE TOWER THAT NIGHT...
SO I DECIDED TO GO UP, AND...
MY MOTHER ...

THEN, HEADMAN IIJIMA, WHAT ABOUT YOU?
I WENT TO THE MEETING AT HALF PAST FIVE.
AND AT SIX, I WENT TO UMEWARA-SAN'S PLACE TOGETHER WITH EMURA-KUN.
THIS MIGHT SURPRISE YOU BUT...
THAT OLD LADY IS CONCERNED ABOUT YOU.
IF ONLY SHE WERE MORE COOPERATIVE ...

SHE SAID THAT SINCE YOU'RE GETTING OLDER..
YOU SHOULDN'T EXERT YOURSELF TOO MUCH, AND INSTEAD RETIRE AND TAKE IT EASY.
SHE SAID, SHE WON'T GIVE YOU THE MONEY FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN FOR THAT REASON...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING! I CAN STILL HANDLE IT!!
I'LL SHOW YOU I'LL REVITALIZE THIS VILLAGE!!
THAT OLD LADY DOESN'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING!
MORE IMPORTANTLY, WILL YOU BE ALL RIGHT?
YOU REEK OF BOOZE.
WHAT WILL SHE SAY IF SHE SMELLS THAT...
.....


THEN WE'LL HELP YOU LOOK.
AND ONCE WE REACHED HER HOUSE ...
I WENT TO THE TOWER WITH THE KIDS...
THE OLD LADY'S GONE?


AND WE CHECKED INSIDE.

I'LL GO UP THROUGH THE EXIT. YOU GO UP THROUGH THE ENTRANCE!
SO WE SPLIT UP AND LOOKED FOR HER.
IT'S PITCH BLACK.
DAMN IT! IF WE OPEN IT UP TO THE PUBLIC, WE'LL HAVE TO MAKE SURE THERE ARE LIGHTS IN HERE.
I WENT UP TO THE HIGHEST FLOOR...
UWAAH!

AND MET THE TWO OF THEM THERE.
NO ...
DID YOU SEE HER?
AND THEN I WENT DOWN AGAIN
YOU TWO TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THE WAY I CAME FROM.
ALL RIGHT. I'LL GO DOWN THE EXIT THIS TIME.

NGH.. JUST WHERE DID SHE..
HOW WAS IT?
ANYWAY, I'LL GO LOOK IN THE FOREST
THERE WASN'T ANYONE
ｹﾞｺｹﾞｺ ｹﾞｺ
I LEFT THE TOWER AT AROUND HALF PAST SIX AND RETURNED TO THE VILLAGE.
IN OTHER WORDS, NO ONE WAS INSIDE THE TOWER AT SIX THIRTY.
I MET SOME OF THE VILLAGERS ON THE WAY. SO IF YOU ASK THEM, THEY'LL CONFIRM IT.

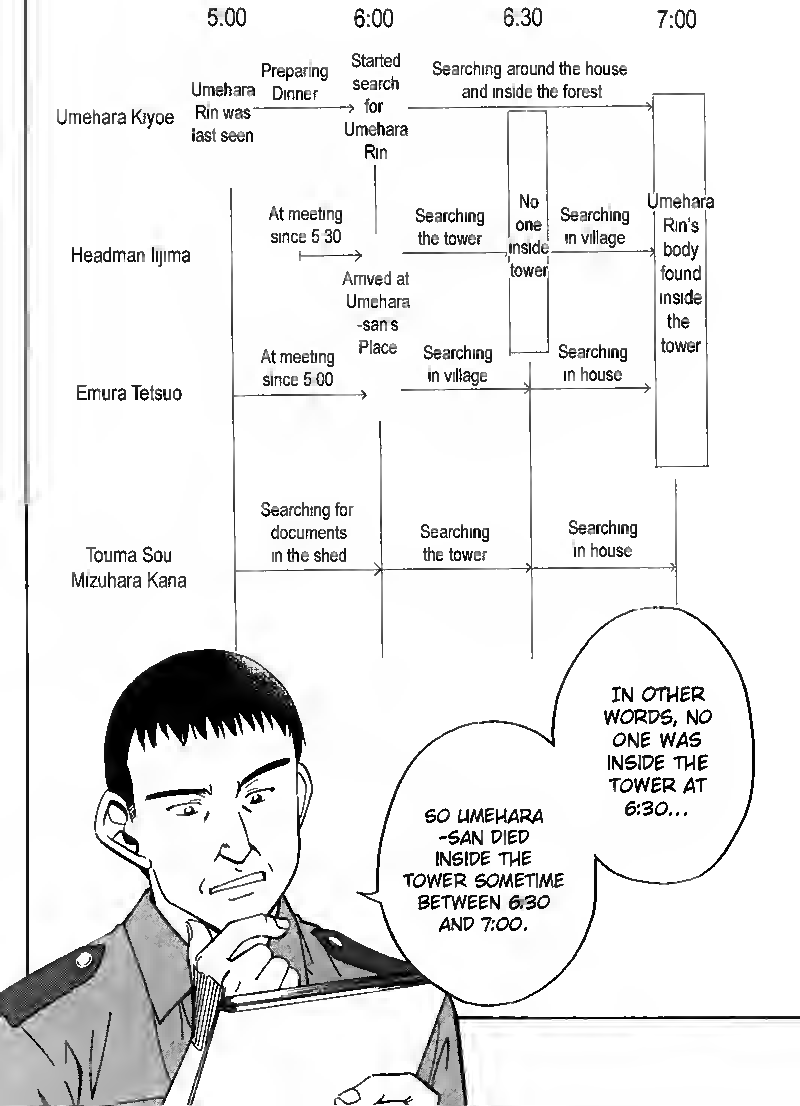
I WENT TO THE MEETING HALL A LITTLE BEFORE FIVE TO HELP WITH THE PREPARATIONS.
AND YOU, EMURA -SAN?
LET'S LOOK FOR HER TOGETHER
AFTERWARDS, I WENT TO UMEHARA-SAN'S PLACE WITH THE VILLAGE HEAD, AT SIX...
I COULDN'T FIND HER SO I WENT BACK. I THINK THAT TOOK ME ABOUT THIRTY MINUTES
I LOOKED FOR HER AROUND THE VILLAGE BUT...
UMEHARA -SAAAAN! ARE YOU THERE?
SO, I CAME BACK AT HALF PAST SIX TO SEARCH INSIDE THE HOUSE.

I'LL GO LOOK IN THE ROOM OVER THERE.
THEN I SEARCHED INSIDE WITH THE KIDS.
YOU TOO?
WE SEARCHED INSIDE THE HOUSE.
UME-HARA -SAN.
I HEARD A SCREAM COMING FROM THE TOWER
AAAAAAH!!
AND THEN, AROUND SEVEN ...
KIYOE!!

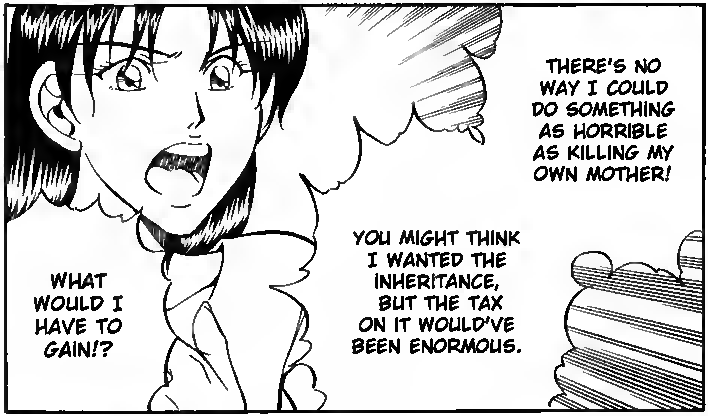
WHAT ABOUT YOU TWO ...
AND WHEN I ARRIVED, I SAW...
JUST LIKE THE VILLAGE HEAD SAID, WE FIRST WENT TO CHECK INSIDE THE TOWER...
I GET IT.
IT'S DARK, SO WATCH YOUR STEP.

HAH, HOW'S THAT!! I DIDN'T FALL!
SAFE ♡
WAH!
YOU HIT MY NOSE WITH YOUR HEEL...
WHAT'S WRONG?
THERE'S NO ONE HERE
AH!
LOOKS LIKE THE VILLAGE HEAD FELL
AND SINCE THE PATH KEEPS GOING THERE'S NO PLACE TO HIDE

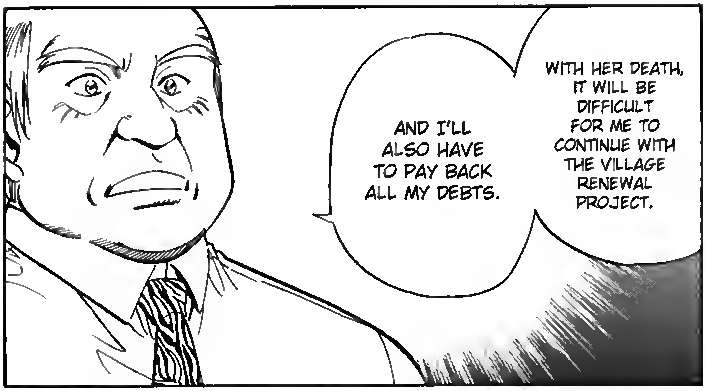
THE CEILING'S THE SAME WAY...
THERE'S NO PLACE TO HIDE ON THIS SIDE EITHER.
I'LL GO LOOK IN THE VILLAGE
IN THE END, THERE WAS NO ONE IN THE TOWER
AFTER A WHILE, EMURA -SAN CAME...
YEAH, LET'S DO THAT
THEN LET'S GO CHECK THE HOUSE?
Since we don't know the area
I SEE ...
WE SEARCHED TOGETHER, AND THEN SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A SCREAM...


5.00
6:00
6.30
7:00
Umehara Kiyoe
Umehara Rin was last seen
Preparing Dinner
Started search for Umehara Rin
Searching around the house and inside the forest
Headman Iijima
At meeting since 5 30
Arrived at Umehara -san's Place
Searching the tower
No one inside tower
Searching in village
Umehara Rin's body found inside the tower
Emura Tetsuo
At meeting since 5 00
Searching in village
Searching in house
Touma Sou
Mizuhara Kana
Searching for documents in the shed
Searching the tower
Searching in house
IN OTHER WORDS, NO ONE WAS INSIDE THE TOWER AT 6:30...
SO UMEHARA -SAN DIED INSIDE THE TOWER SOMETIME BETWEEN 6:30 AND 7:00.

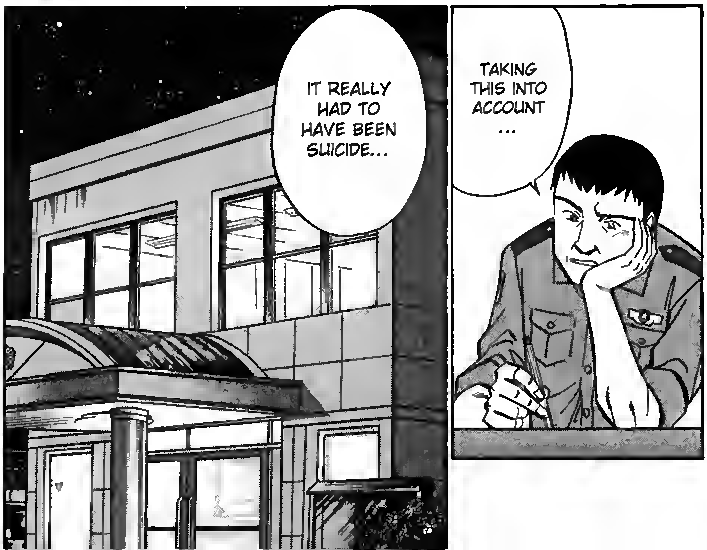
STOP JOKING!
THE ONLY ONE WITHOUT AN ALIBI FOR THAT TIME IS KIYOE-SAN.

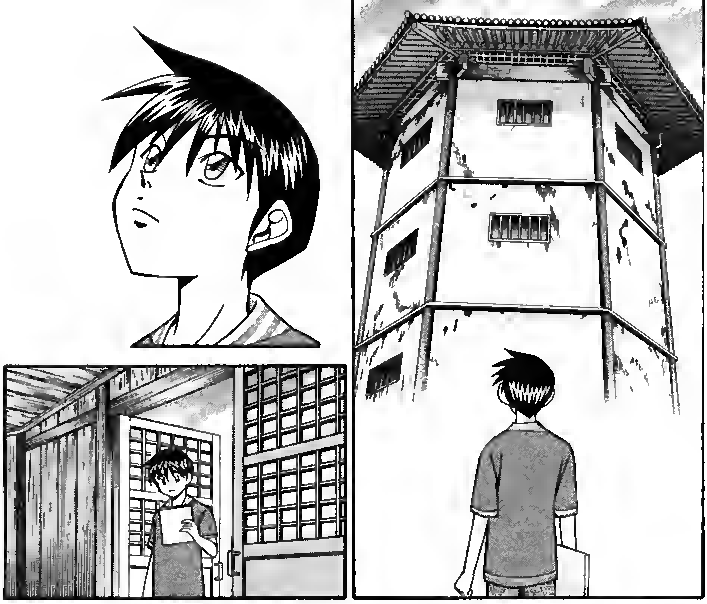

WHAT WOULD I HAVE TO GAIN!?
YOU MIGHT THINK I WANTED THE INHERITANCE, BUT THE TAX ON IT WOULD'VE BEEN ENORMOUS.
THERE'S NO WAY I COULD DO SOMETHING AS HORRIBLE AS KILLING MY OWN MOTHER!

EVEN FOR ME, IT'S NOT AS IF MY DEBT WILL BE CLEARED WITH HER DEAD... BESIDES IF KIYOE OR I HAD COMMITTED THE MURDER, WE WOULD'VE RUN AWAY TOGETHER.
THAT'S TRUE, THE INHERITANCE TAX WOULD BE LARGE... IT'S NOT EASY TO TURN LAND INTO MONEY IN THIS DAY AND AGE...

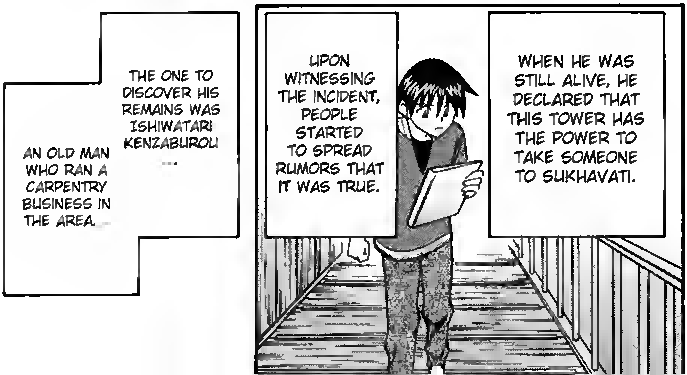

WITH HER DEATH, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR ME TO CONTINUE WITH THE VILLAGE RENEWAL PROJECT.
AND I'LL ALSO HAVE TO PAY BACK ALL MY DEBTS.

HMM ...
THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NOTHING IN IT FOR ME!


IT REALLY HAD TO HAVE BEEN SUICIDE...
TAKING THIS INTO ACCOUNT ...

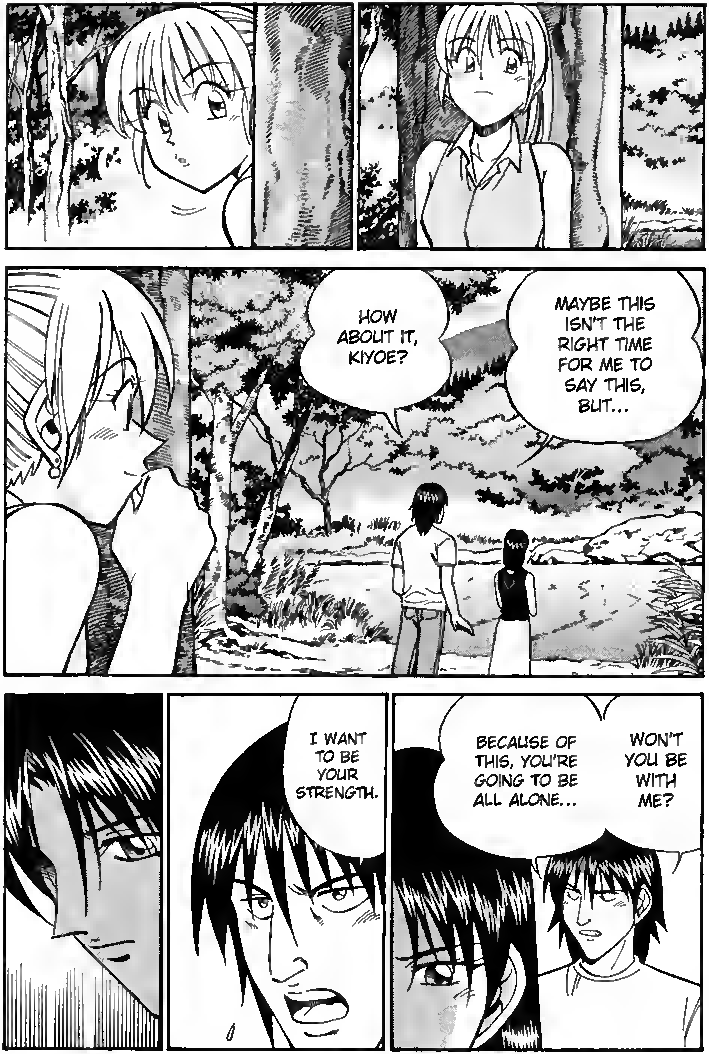


A STRANGE TOWER BUILT BY UMEHARA TAIZOU...
奇怪な塔
ONE YEAR AFTER HE HAD GONE MISSING, HIS REMAINS WERE FOUND INSIDE THE TOWER.

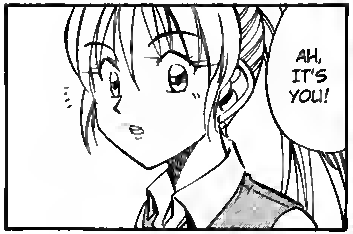

AN OLD MAN WHO RAN A CARPENTRY BUSINESS IN THE AREA.
THE ONE TO DISCOVER HIS REMAINS WAS ISHIWATARI KENZABUROU ...
UPON WITNESSING THE INCIDENT, PEOPLE STARTED TO SPREAD RUMORS THAT IT WAS TRUE.
WHEN HE WAS STILL ALIVE, HE DECLARED THAT THIS TOWER HAS THE POWER TO TAKE SOMEONE TO SUKHAVATI.

A CARPENTER!?
HERE IT IS!
HUH? THERE SHOULD BE A COPY OF THE CONTRACT FROM WHEN THE TOWER WAS BUILT...
ISHIWATARI KENZABUROU
ISHIWATARI KENZABUROU!! IT'S THE SAME NAME!!
WAS THE CARPENTER WHO HELPED BUILD IT!!
IN OTHER WORDS, THE PERSON WHO DISCOVERED UMEHARA TAIZOU'S REMAINS...

SOMETHING.. DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT...
THERE'S SOMETHING IN THIS TOWER!!

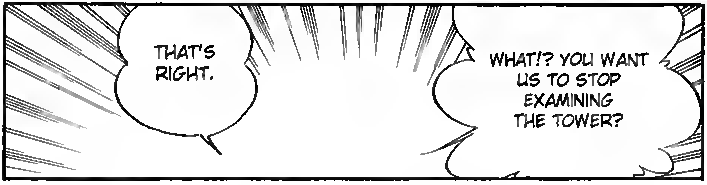

HOW ABOUT IT, KIYOE?
MAYBE THIS ISN'T THE RIGHT TIME FOR ME TO SAY THIS, BUT...
I WANT TO BE YOUR STRENGTH.
BECAUSE OF THIS, YOU'RE GOING TO BE ALL ALONE...
WON'T YOU BE WITH ME?

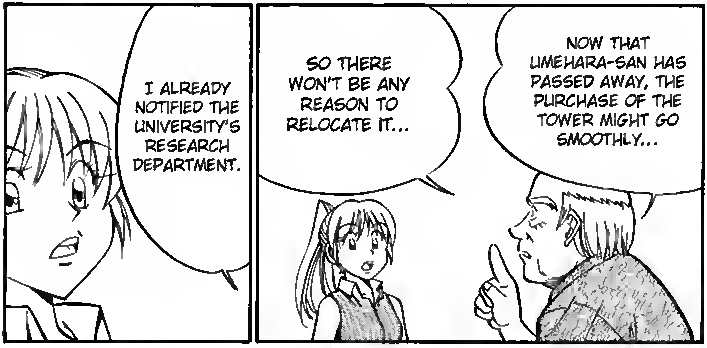
WHY DID YOU DRINK ALCOHOL THAT NIGHT?
YOU SWORE TO ME THAT YOU HAD QUIT.
THAT'S WHY... PLEASE WAIT UNTIL AFTER EVERYTHING IS SORTED OUT.
I SEE ...
I UNDER-STAND.
ANYWAY, A LOT OF THINGS HAPPENED ONE AFTER ANOTHER. I CAN'T THINK.
TH-THAT WAS...


AH, IT'S YOU!

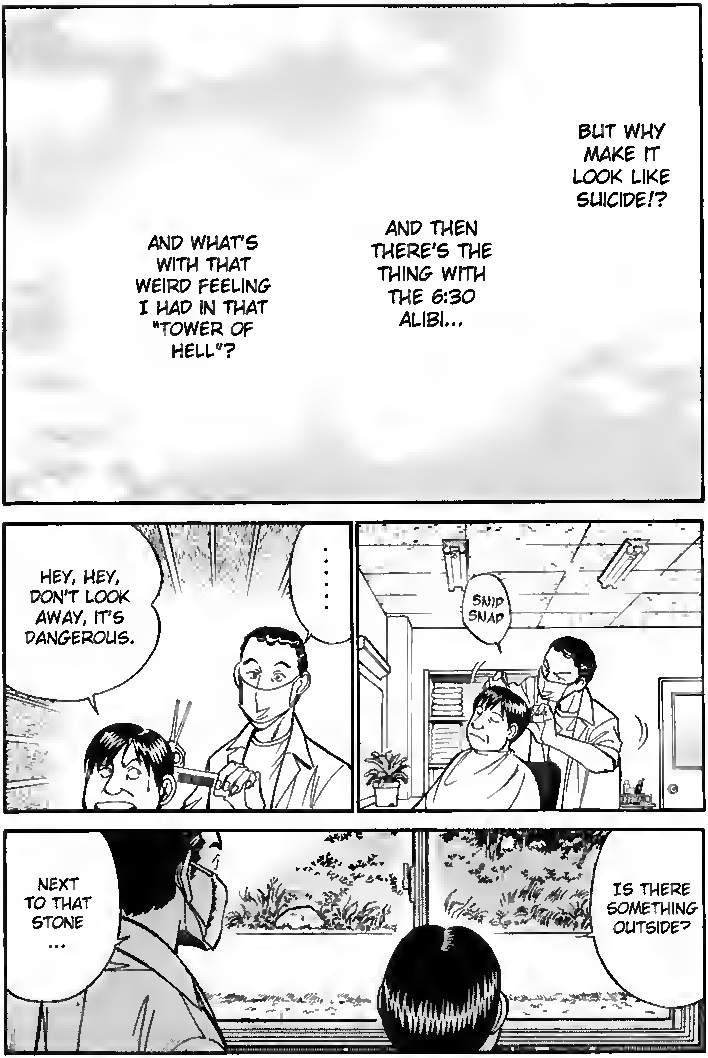
HM~ THE WORLD OF ADULTS!

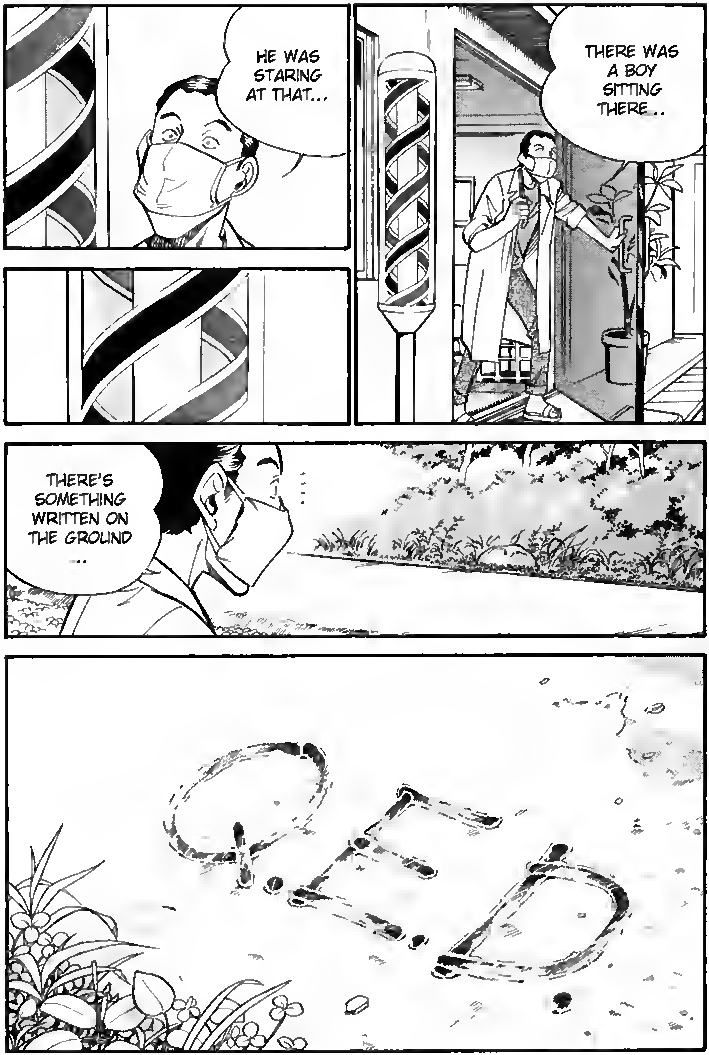
?
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU.


THAT'S RIGHT.
WHAT!? YOU WANT US TO STOP EXAMINING THE TOWER?


I ALREADY NOTIFIED THE UNIVERSITY'S RESEARCH DEPARTMENT.
SO THERE WON'T BE ANY REASON TO RELOCATE IT...
NOW THAT LIMEHARA-SAN HAS PASSED AWAY, THE PURCHASE OF THE TOWER MIGHT GO SMOOTHLY...

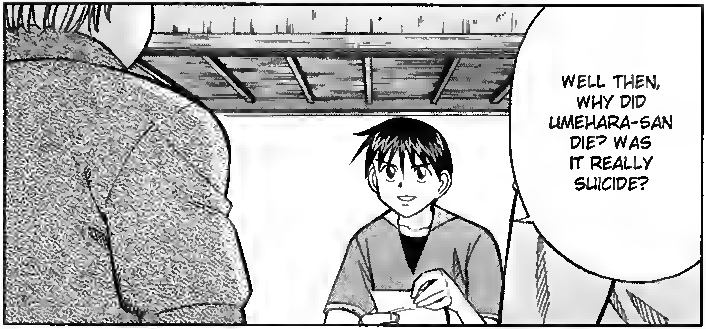
ANYWAY, I JUST WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW... YOU'VE BEEN A GREAT HELP.
NOW I JUST HAVE TO GO TO KIYOE-SAN TO NEGOTIATE.
JUST SEND YOUR MATERIALS TO THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT.
I WONDER IF UMEHARA-SAN REALLY COMMITTED SUICIDE...
OR DID SOMEONE MURDER HER...


BUT WHY MAKE IT LOOK LIKE SUICIDE!?
AND THEN THERE'S THE THING WITH THE 6:30 ALIBI...
AND WHAT'S WITH THAT WEIRD FEELING I HAD IN THAT "TOWER OF HELL"?
HEY, HEY, DON'T LOOK AWAY, IT'S DANGEROUS.
.....
SNIP SNAP
NEXT TO THAT STONE ...
IS THERE SOMETHING OUTSIDE?


HE WAS STARING AT THAT...
THERE WAS A BOY SITTING THERE...
THERE'S SOMETHING WRITTEN ON THE GROUND ...
END

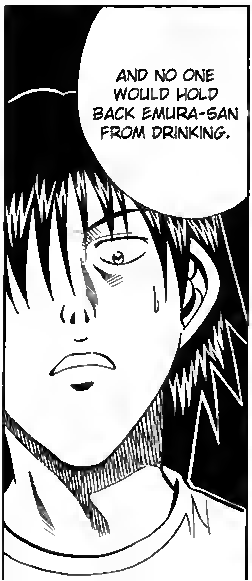
THESE ARE THE RESULTS OF YOUR INVESTIGATION?
THAT'S RIGHT, SINCE WE LOOKED AT IT, I WANTED TO SHARE MY FINDINGS WITH EVERYONE...

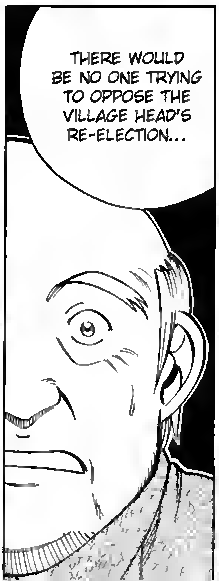
THERE'S NO NEED FOR THAT...
BUT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL...
LET HIM TALK SINCE HE WENT THROUGH THE TROUBLE...
WELL ...
WELL THEN, STARTING FROM YESTERDAY'S INCIDENT...
HEY, HEY!
THAT'S NOT RELATED TO THE INVESTIGATION OF THE TOWER...
IT IS.
IT WILL DEFINITELY CONNECT IN THE END, SO PLEASE LISTEN.

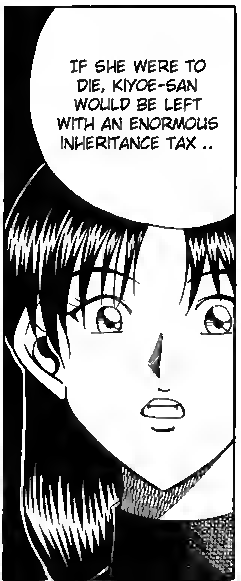

WELL THEN, WHY DID UMEHARA-SAN DIE? WAS IT REALLY SUICIDE?

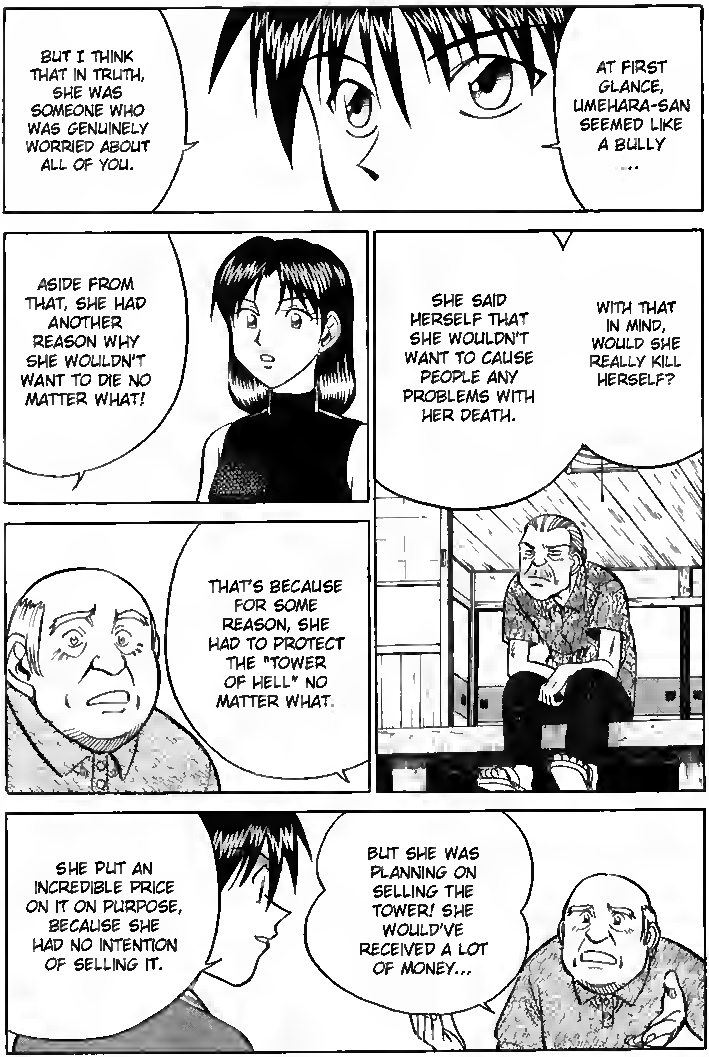
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S STRANGE?

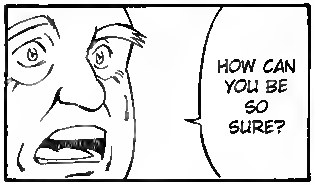
BUT THE POLICE SAID...

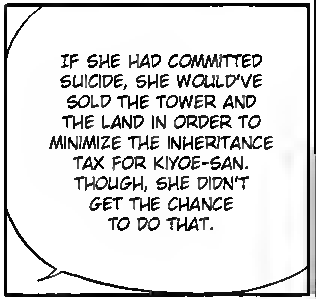

AND NO ONE WOULD HOLD BACK EMURA-SAN FROM DRINKING.


THERE WOULD BE NO ONE TRYING TO OPPOSE THE VILLAGE HEAD'S RE-ELECTION...

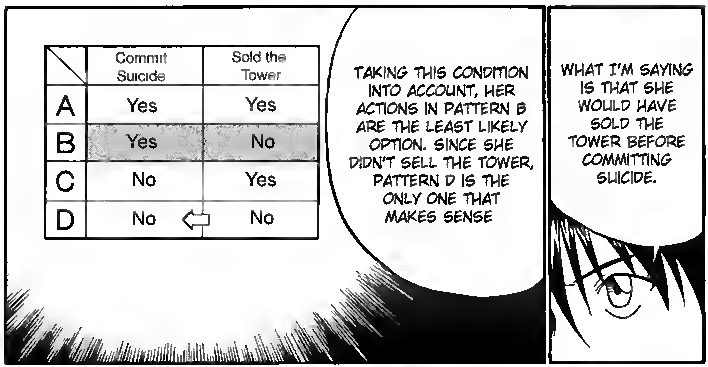

IF SHE WERE TO DIE, KIYOE-SAN WOULD BE LEFT WITH AN ENORMOUS INHERITANCE TAX ..


AT FIRST GLANCE, UMEHARA-SAN SEEMED LIKE A BULLY ...
BUT I THINK THAT IN TRUTH, SHE WAS SOMEONE WHO WAS GENUINELY WORRIED ABOUT ALL OF YOU.
WITH THAT IN MIND, WOULD SHE REALLY KILL HERSELF?
SHE SAID HERSELF THAT SHE WOULDN'T WANT TO CAUSE PEOPLE ANY PROBLEMS WITH HER DEATH.
ASIDE FROM THAT, SHE HAD ANOTHER REASON WHY SHE WOULDN'T WANT TO DIE NO MATTER WHAT!
THAT'S BECAUSE FOR SOME REASON, SHE HAD TO PROTECT THE "TOWER OF HELL" NO MATTER WHAT.
BUT SHE WAS PLANNING ON SELLING THE TOWER! SHE WOULD'VE RECEIVED A LOT OF MONEY...
SHE PUT AN INCREDIBLE PRICE ON IT ON PURPOSE, BECAUSE SHE HAD NO INTENTION OF SELLING IT.


HOW CAN YOU BE SO SURE?


IF SHE HAD COMMITTED SUICIDE, SHE WOULD'VE SOLD THE TOWER AND THE LAND IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE THE INHERITANCE TAX FOR KIYOE-SAN. THOUGH, SHE DIDN'T GET THE CHANCE TO DO THAT.

AND THE FACT THAT SHE DIDN'T SELL THE TOWER MEANS THAT HER DEATH WASN'T A SUICIDE.

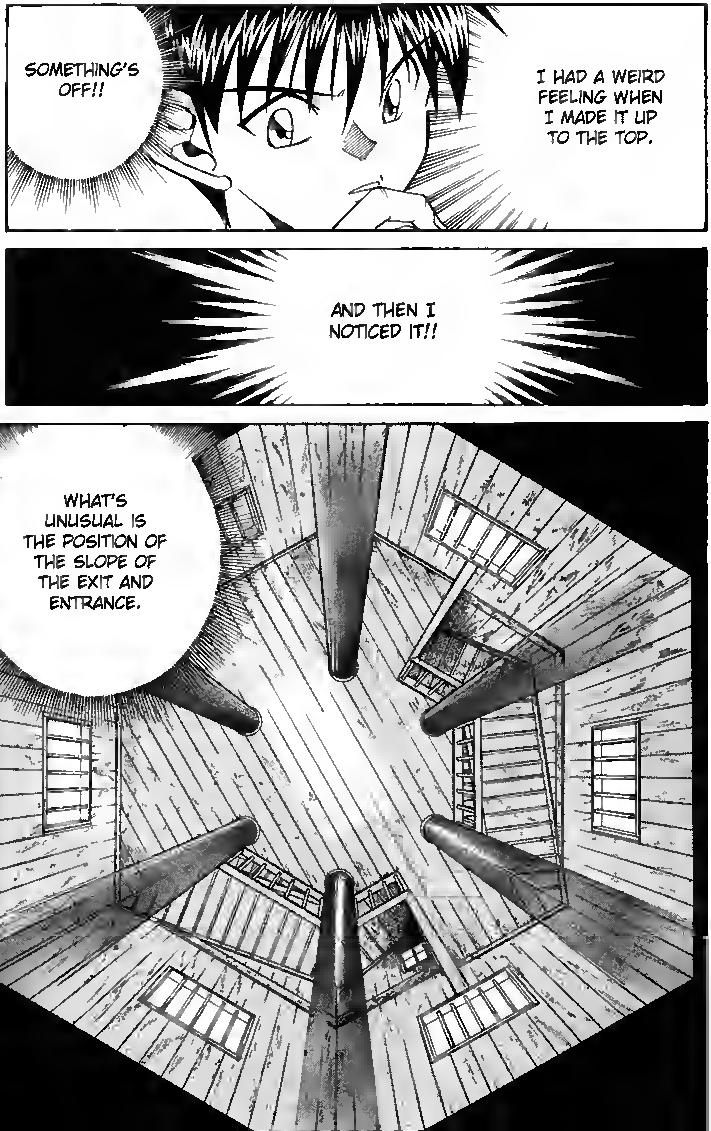

Commit Suicide
Sold the Tower
A
Yes
Yes
B
Yes
No
C
No
Yes
D
No
No
TAKING THIS CONDITION INTO ACCOUNT, HER ACTIONS IN PATTERN B ARE THE LEAST LIKELY OPTION. SINCE SHE DIDN'T SELL THE TOWER, PATTERN D IS THE ONLY ONE THAT MAKES SENSE
WHAT I'M SAYING IS THAT SHE WOULD HAVE SOLD THE TOWER BEFORE COMMITTING SUICIDE.

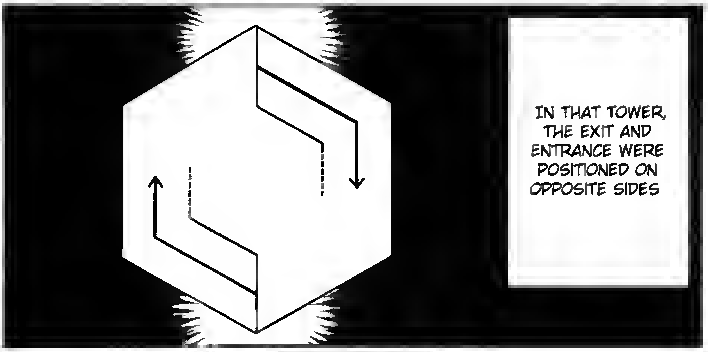
IN OTHER WORDS, SOMEONE KILLED HER.
WHO WOULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
ME?
THE ONLY ONE WITHOUT AN ALIBI FOR THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT WAS YOU, KIYOE-SAN.
5時
6時
7時
梅原清江
飯島村長
江村哲夫
梅原りんの遺体を庭で発見
梅原原に到着
現場には誰もいなかった

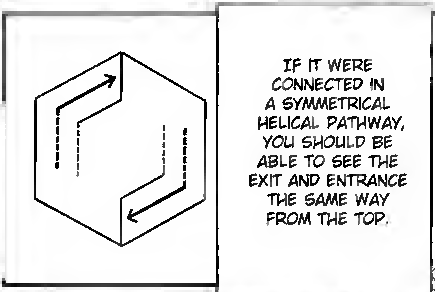
AND, YOU ALSO TURNED DOWN EMURA-SAN'S OFFER OF RE-MARRIAGE
BESIDES, YOU WOULD BE LEFT WITH A HUGE INHERITANCE TAX.
HOWEVER, YOU DON'T HAVE A MOTIVE
THEN THERE WAS NO CULPRIT...
NO, THERE'S ANOTHER IMPORTANT FACTOR TO BE CONSIDERED IN THIS INCIDENT...
LIKE I SAID IN THE BEGINNING ..
IT'S THAT "TOWER OF HELL"!!

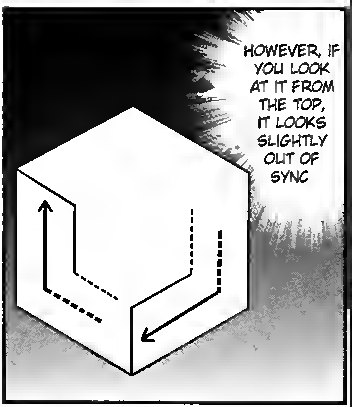
YOU SEE, UMEHARA TAIZOU'S DESIGNER FOR THIS TOWER INCLUDED...
A SPECIAL TRICK!!
A SPECIAL TRICK?
AND THAT TRICK IS THE KEY TO THIS INCIDENT.

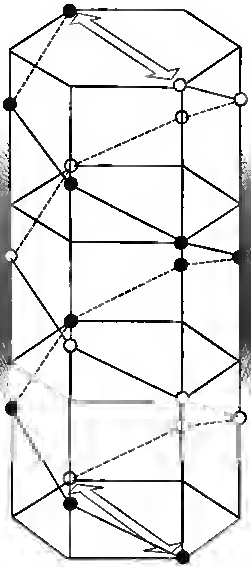
I ALSO WENT UP SEVERAL TIMES AND HAVEN'T SEEN ANYTHING EITHER.
BUT I'VE BEEN GOING UP THERE SINCE I WAS YOUNG AND I NEVER SAW ANYTHING LIKE THAT.
NOT BEING ABLE TO SEE ANYTHING AT FIRST GLANCE IS THE KEY.
THAT'S THE POINT.
BUT IT'S DIFFERENT WHEN YOU MAKE IT TO THE TOP FLOOR.
THERE'S NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT IT ON YOUR WAY UP..


SOMETHING'S OFF!!
I HAD A WEIRD FEELING WHEN I MADE IT UP TO THE TOP.
AND THEN I NOTICED IT!!
WHAT'S UNUSUAL IS THE POSITION OF THE SLOPE OF THE EXIT AND ENTRANCE.


IN THAT TOWER, THE EXIT AND ENTRANCE WERE POSITIONED ON OPPOSITE SIDES

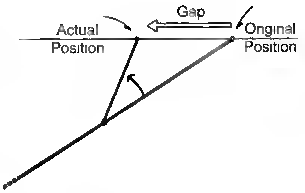

IF IT WERE CONNECTED IN A SYMMETRICAL HELICAL PATHWAY, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE THE EXIT AND ENTRANCE THE SAME WAY FROM THE TOP.


HOWEVER, IF YOU LOOK AT IT FROM THE TOP, IT LOOKS SLIGHTLY OUT OF SYNC



WHAT DO YOU THINK THE REASON FOR THAT IS?
THERE'S ONLY ONE POSSIBLE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION...
AND THAT IS...
THAT SOMEWHERE ALONG THE PATH, THERE IS A PART WITH A STEEPER SLOPE.

THERE IS A GAP BETWEEN THE POSITION OF THE ENTRANCE AND EXIT.



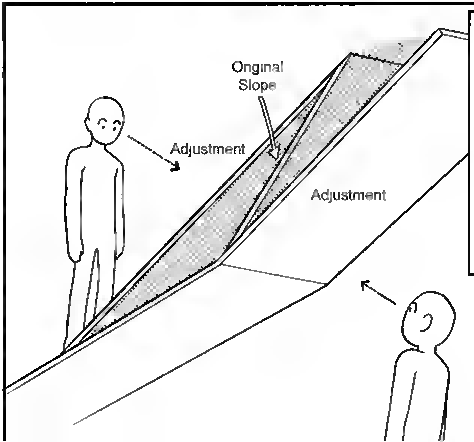
IN OTHER WORDS, BECAUSE THERE IS A PART WITH A STEEPER SLOPE SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PATH...

I SAID IT BEFORE, RIGHT?

THAT'S THE POINT.

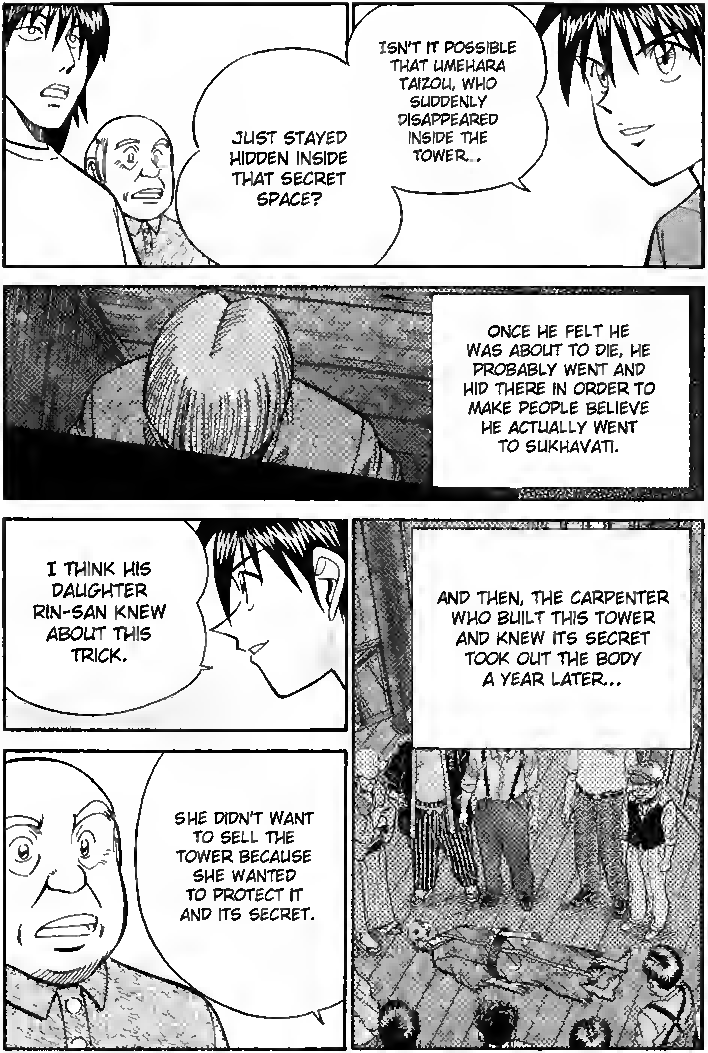
BUT THERE SHOULDN'T BE A CHANGE IN THE SLOPE...

EVERYTHING LOOKING NORMAL IS THE POINT.



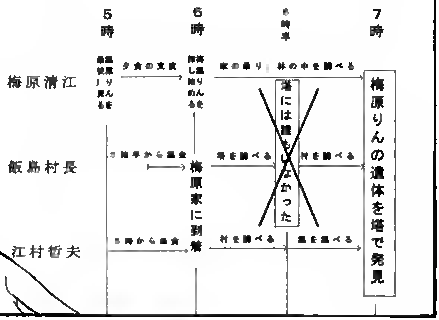
THE PATH HAS BEEN ADJUSTED IN A WAY THAT MAKES YOU UNABLE TO SEE A DIFFERENCE IN THE ANGLE.

AND INSIDE THAT ADJUSTED PART THERE IS A SPACE YOU CAN'T SEE FROM THE OUTSIDE
IN OTHER WORDS... THERE IS A HIDDEN SPACE INSIDE THAT TOWER OF HELL.


ISN'T IT POSSIBLE THAT UMEHARA TAIZOU, WHO SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED INSIDE THE TOWER...
JUST STAYED HIDDEN INSIDE THAT SECRET SPACE?
ONCE HE FELT HE WAS ABOUT TO DIE, HE PROBABLY WENT AND HID THERE IN ORDER TO MAKE PEOPLE BELIEVE HE ACTUALLY WENT TO SUKHAVATI.
I THINK HIS DAUGHTER RIN-SAN KNEW ABOUT THIS TRICK.
AND THEN, THE CARPENTER WHO BUILT THIS TOWER AND KNEW ITS SECRET TOOK OUT THE BODY A YEAR LATER...
SHE DIDN'T WANT TO SELL THE TOWER BECAUSE SHE WANTED TO PROTECT IT AND ITS SECRET.

NOW LET'S THINK BACK A BIT.

IF HER BODY WAS HIDDEN INSIDE THAT SPACE, THEN THE CRIME DIDN'T HAVE TO HAPPEN AT 6:30 OR LATER.



SO WE HAVE TO RE-CHECK EVERYONE'S ALIBIS.

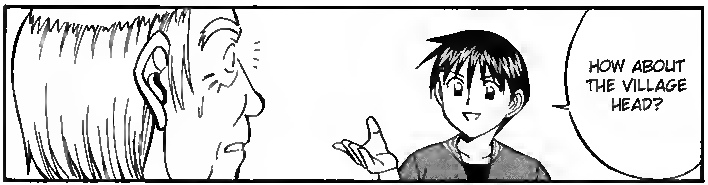
FIRST, HOW DOES IT LOOK WITH KIYOE-SAN?

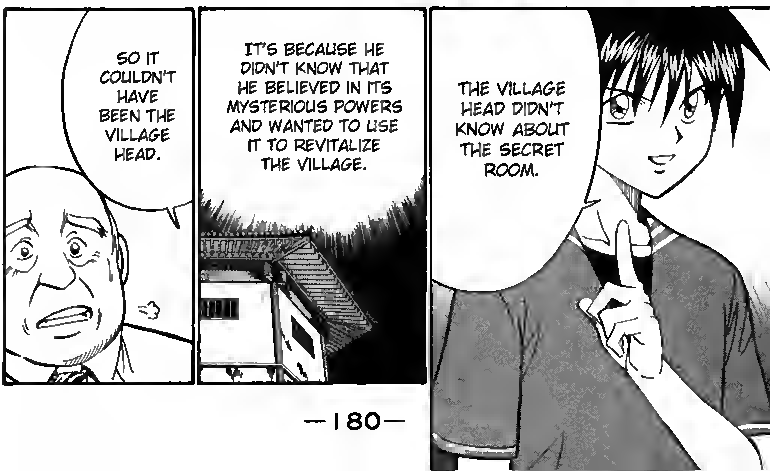
SHE DIDN'T HAVE AN ALIBI IN THE FIRST PLACE...

SO WE CAN SAY SHE DIDN'T USE THE SECRET ROOM IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH AN ALIBI FOR HERSELF.

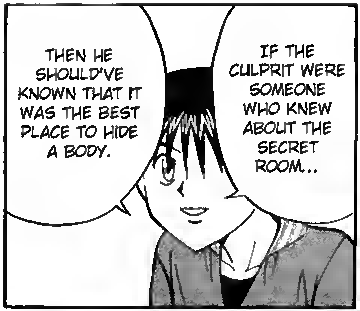
YET YOU WENT TO LOOK IN THE WOODS ALONE...
IF YOU WANTED TO CREATE AN ALIBI BY HIDING THE BODY, YOU SHOULD'VE HAD AN ALIBI LIKE THE REST.

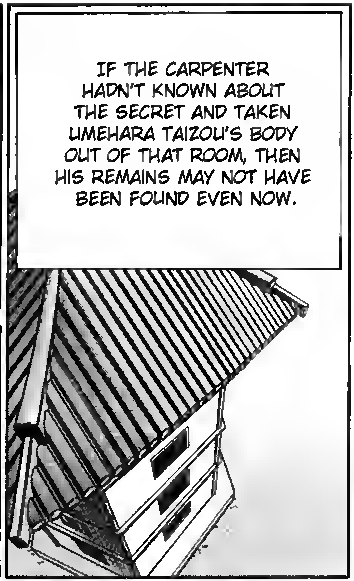
WHICH MEANS IT'S UNLIKELY SHE IS THE CULPRIT.

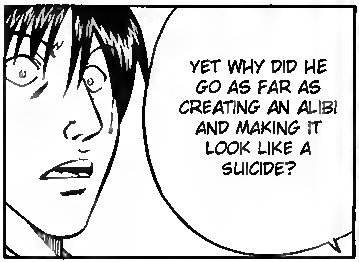

HOW ABOUT THE VILLAGE HEAD?


SO IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN THE VILLAGE HEAD.
IT'S BECAUSE HE DIDN'T KNOW THAT HE BELIEVED IN IT'S MYSTERIOUS POWERS AND WANTED TO USE IT TO REVITALIZE THE VILLAGE.
THE VILLAGE HEAD DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE SECRET ROOM.

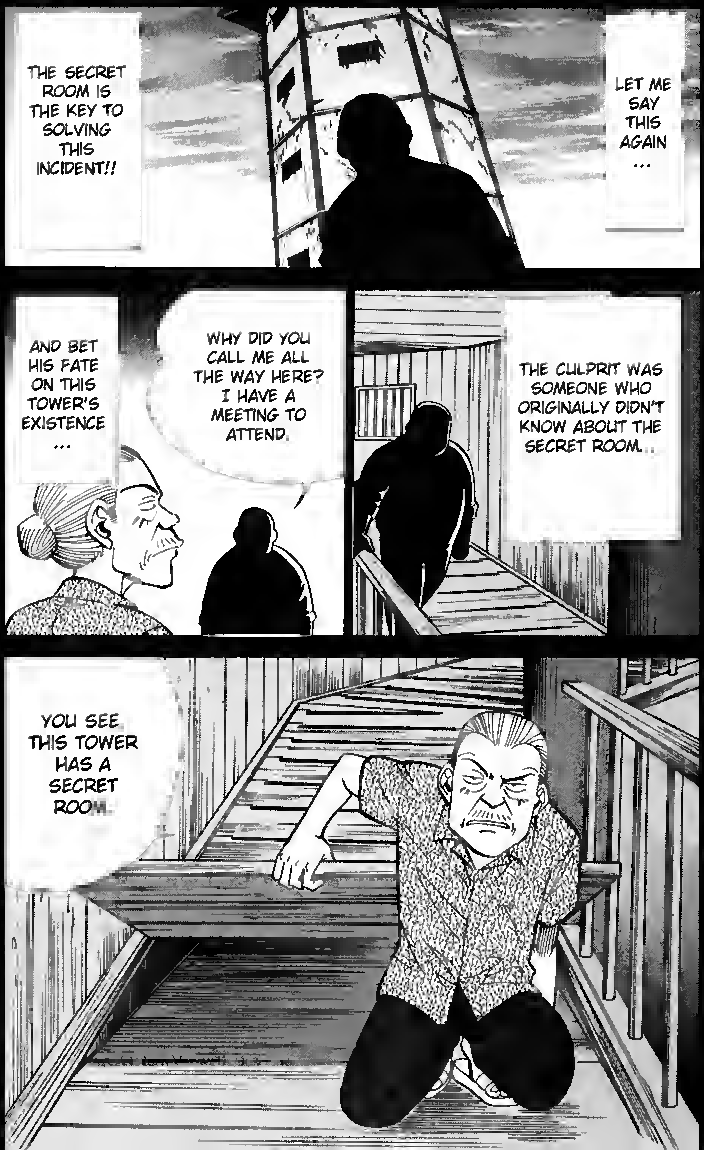
YOU HATED UMEHARA-SAN BECAUSE SHE WAS STANDING IN THE WAY OF YOU AND KIYOE-SAN...
NOW THEN, EMURA-SAN ...
HOWEVER, IF YOU WERE THE CULPRIT, THERE IS STILL A QUESTION.
AND THAT IS...
WHY TAKE HER OUT OF THE HIDDEN ROOM AND MAKE IT LOOK LIKE A SUICIDE?


IF THE CULPRIT WERE SOMEONE WHO KNEW ABOUT THE SECRET ROOM...
THEN HE SHOULD'VE KNOWN THAT IT WAS THE BEST PLACE TO HIDE A BODY.


IF THE CARPENTER HADN'T KNOWN ABOUT THE SECRET AND TAKEN UMEHARA TAIZOU'S BODY OUT OF THAT ROOM, THEN HIS REMAINS MAY NOT HAVE BEEN FOUND EVEN NOW.


YET WHY DID HE GO AS FAR AS CREATING AN ALIBI AND MAKING IT LOOK LIKE A SUICIDE?

I THINK IT WAS BECAUSE THE CULPRIT WAS SOMEONE WHO JUST COULDN'T LEAVE THE BODY THERE.


THE SECRET ROOM IS THE KEY TO SOLVING THIS INCIDENT!!
LET ME SAY THIS AGAIN ...
THE CULPRIT WAS SOMEONE WHO ORIGINALLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE SECRET ROOM...
WHY DID YOU CALL ME ALL THE WAY HERE? I HAVE A MEETING TO ATTEND.
AND BET HIS FATE ON THIS TOWER'S EXISTENCE ...
YOU SEE, THIS TOWER HAS A SECRET ROOM.

SO GIVE UP ON USING IT FOR THE VILLAGE RENEWAL PROJECT.
IT DOESN'T HAVE ANY MYSTERIOUS POWERS
UMEHARA-SAN TOLD HIM THE SECRET BECAUSE SHE WANTED HIM TO GIVE UP.
WANTED TO HIDE THAT SECRET.
BUT THE CULPRIT ...
SO HE HID THE BODY AND WENT TO THE MEETING...

AND WHEN WE WENT TO CHECK THE TOWER TOGETHER ...
GO DOWN THE WAY I CAME FROM...
HE TOOK OUT THE BODY...
AND MADE IT LOOK LIKE A SUICIDE
AND THE REASON WHY HE COULDN'T JUST LEAVE THE BODY THERE WAS...
BECAUSE HE WAS AFRAID SOMEONE MIGHT FIND IT ONCE THE TOWER BECAME OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.
LIKE I SAID AT THE BEGINNING, THIS WAS A MURDER WHERE THE SECRET ROOM PLAYED A KEY ROLE...
AND THE CULPRIT IS YOU...

HEADMAN IIJIMA.

THAT...IS THE END OF MY DEMONSTRATION.
UWAH
THIS WORK KINDA LEAVES A BAD TASTE IN YOUR MOUTH.

I WONDER WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE TOWER ...
MIZUHARA -SAN, DO YOU KNOW ABOUT KLEIN BOTTLES?
NOPE, WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S A BOTTLE WHERE THE TWO OPENINGS ARE JOINED TOGETHER...
JUST WHEN YOU THINK YOU'RE AT THE END YOU RETURN TO THE BEGINNING. IT'S A BOTTLE WITHOUT AN END.
HMM ...
IT'S JUST LIKE THAT TOWER, HUH?
WHO KNOWS, AS LONG AS THE TOWER IS THERE SOMETHING NEW MIGHT BEGIN.

YEAH, SOUNDS NICE.
HOW ABOUT IT? SHOULD WE TAKE A PICTURE FOR OURSELVES?
BE-BEEP

●災厄の男…マガジンGREAT 2002年5月号掲載
●クラインの塔…マガジンGREAT 2002年7月号掲載

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Q.E.D. 証明終了(しょうめいしゅうりょう)⑬

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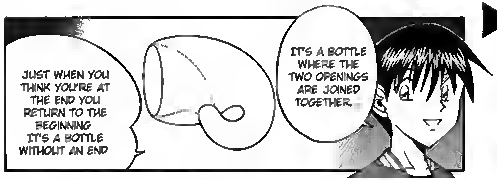
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Klein bottles are an example of a non-orientable surface, or a one-sided surface. Something similar would be a Mobius strip. For topology lovers, you can buy glass representations of Klein bottles

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